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THE NEW YORKER

MAY 21, 2001

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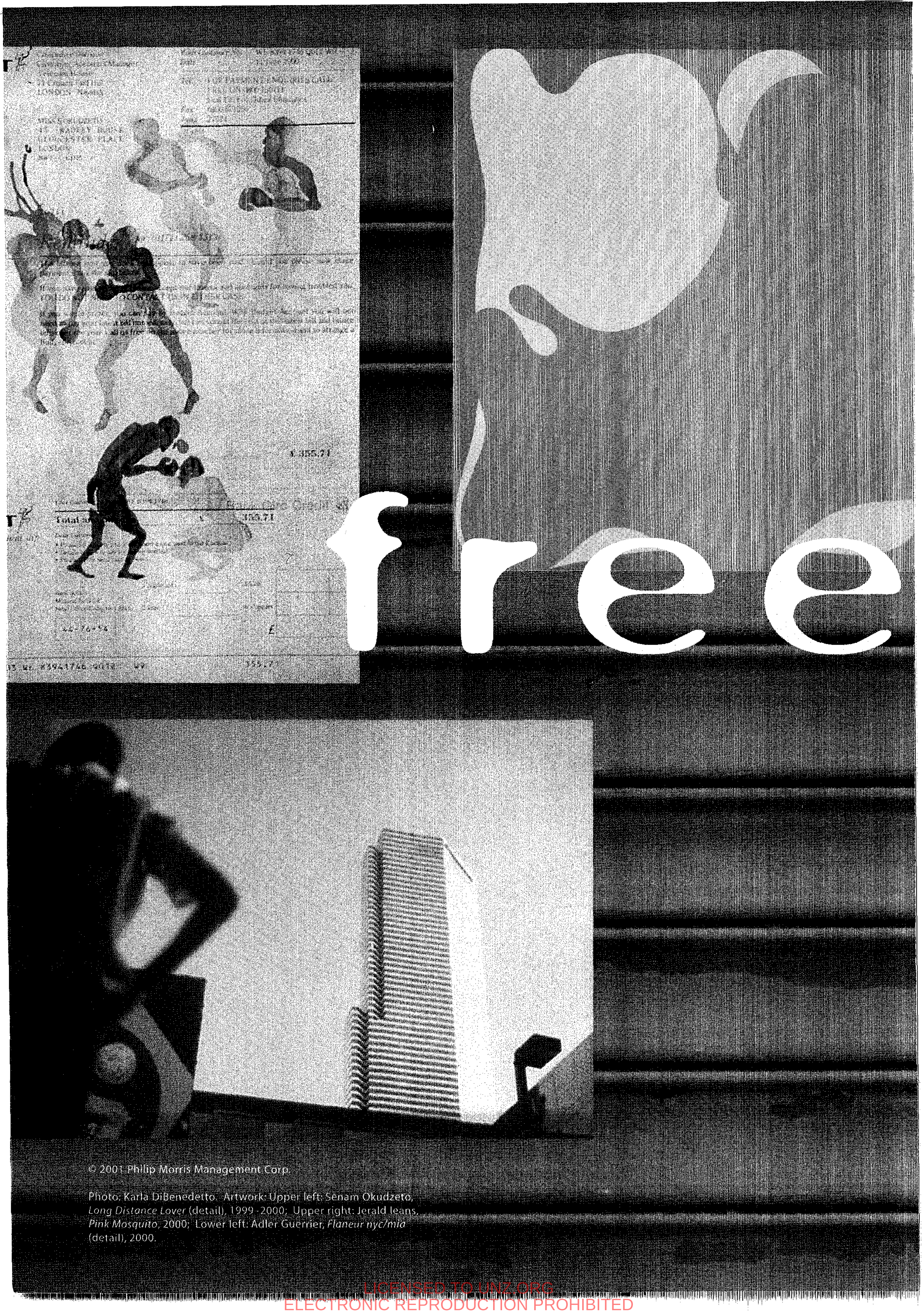

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Photo: Karla DiBenedetto. Artwork: Upper left: Senam Okudzeto, *Long Distance Lover* (detail), 1999-2000; Upper right: Jerald Ieans, *Pink Mosquito*, 2000; Lower left: Adler Guerrier, *Flaneur nyc/mia* (detail), 2000.

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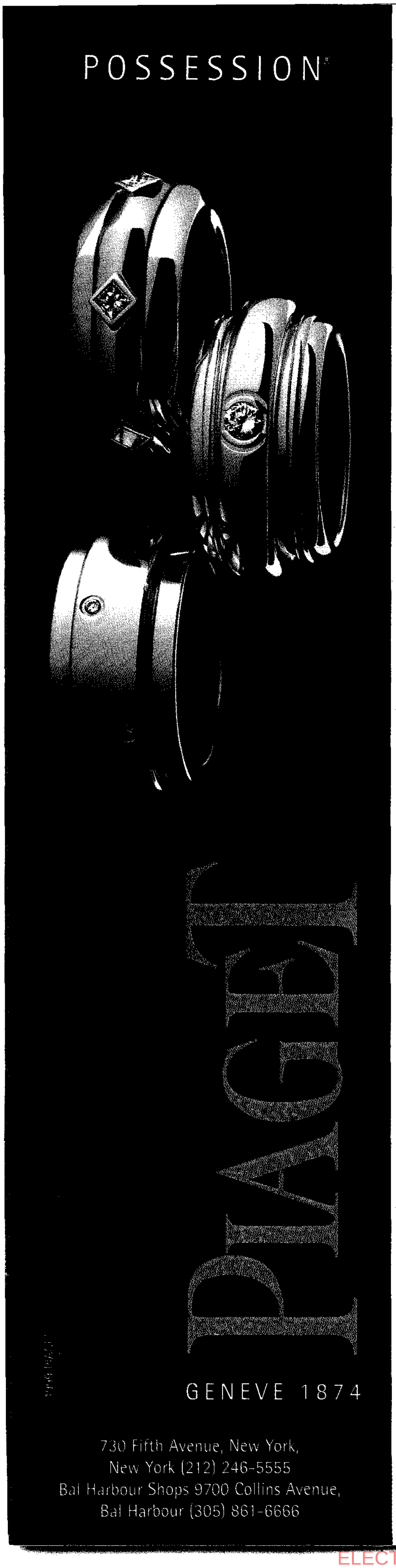

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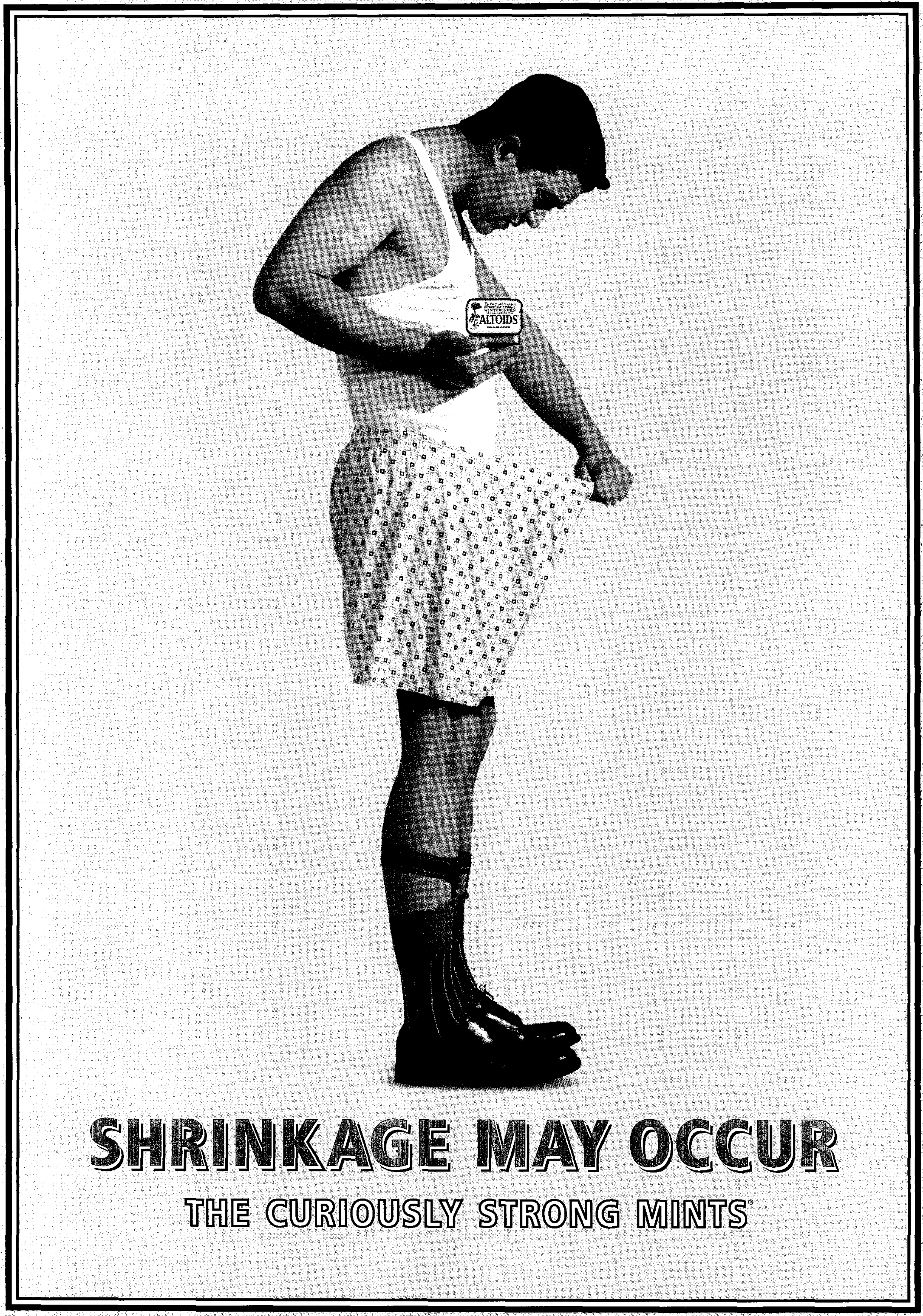
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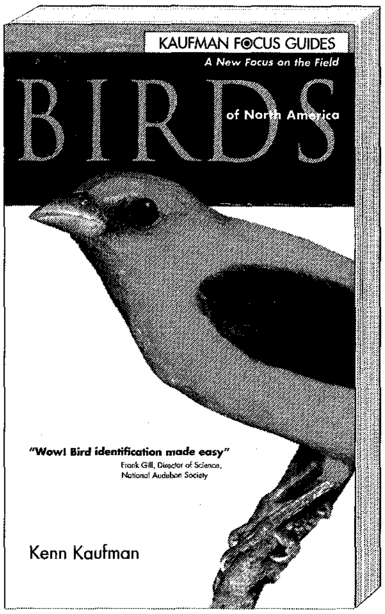
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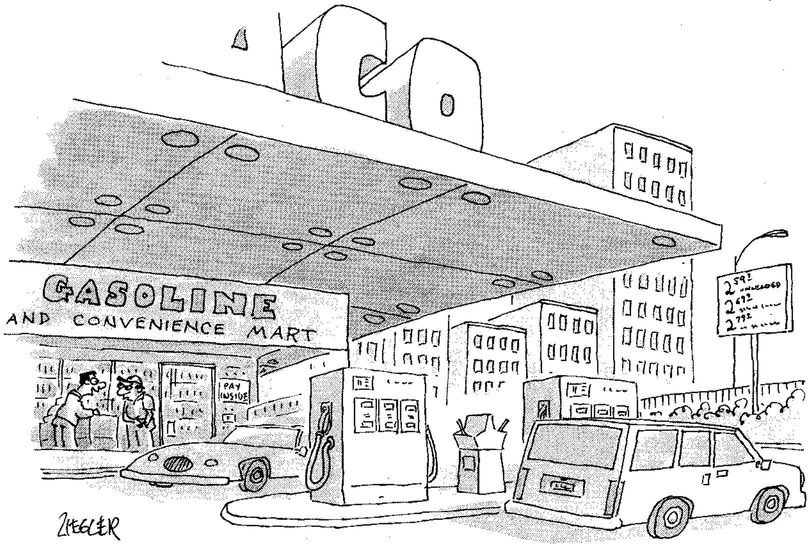

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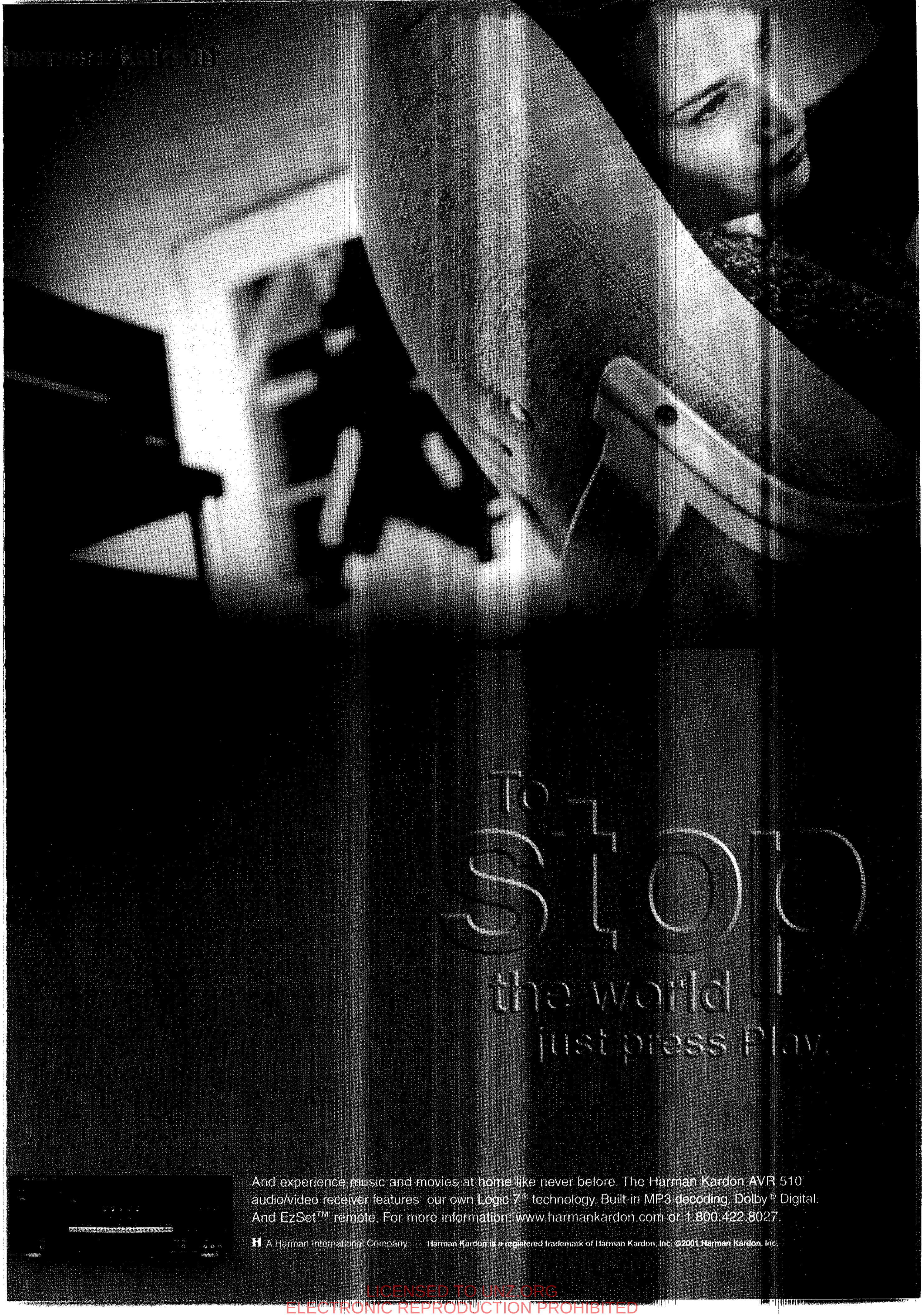
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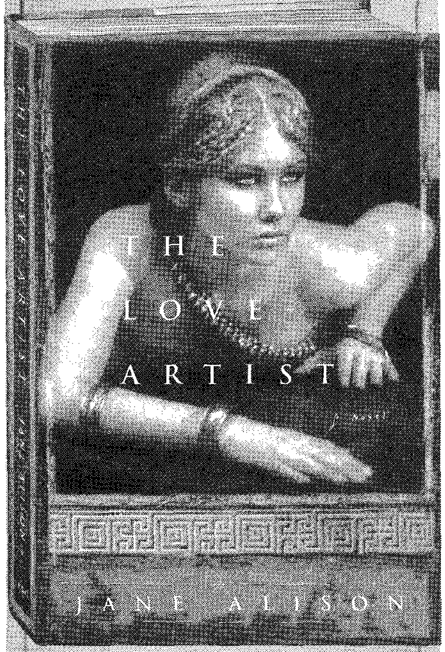

THE LOVE - ARTIST
JANE ALISON

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—Carlin Romano
The Philadelphia Inquirer

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THE MAIL

COLOR LINES

John Updike's statement, in his review of Colson Whitehead's "John Henry Days," that the novel's central character "need not be black at all," reveals a questionable stance on the nature of race in art (Books, May 7th). Updike finds that the character J. Sutter's "relatively race-blind" life style and social interactions rob him of the "heroism that persecution and disadvantage impose" on traditional black characters in literature, and even questions the "aesthetic" value of writing such a character. Is Updike saying that if a black character isn't written in the stereotypical constructs of his race, if his color is not justified by a "claim . . . on the American conscience," then he is not interesting for readers? Can Updike imagine characters, like Whitehead's, who are simply black, without there being a need or a claim to be redeemed? Updike says that good writing "refreshes our sense of the world." The problem arises when, refreshed, we awaken in the same old place. I hope that Updike revisits this novel, and the new world Whitehead is writing for.

Robert Sindelar
Seattle, Wash.

THE GOOD WITCH

Louis Menand's story on Hetty Green, the "Witch of Wall Street," mentions her heirs' gift to Wellesley College, which gave her name to Green Hall ("She Had to Have It," April 23rd & 30th). Many years ago, when I was an undergraduate at Wellesley, I was given the job of preparing a brochure for campus visitors. In researching Green Hall, I became fascinated with Hetty, and wrote up a few stories about her business machinations. I loved the thought of her in her voluminous black skirts sitting on the floor of her broker's office (she was supposedly too frugal to rent one herself), with her statements scattered about her. Unfortunately, the woman who ran the information bureau was not so enchanted. She insisted that we strike the references to Hetty as "not in keeping with the image of Wellesley." Apparently, nice young women didn't make money like that.

Sally Cohen
London, England

D-I-V-O-R-C-E

Larissa MacFarquhar's Profile of the divorce lawyer Lester Wallman is, sadly, a fair representation of what one can expect from the matrimonial bar ("So You Want a Divorce," April 23rd & 30th). In Wallman's world, clients are kept in holding rooms and the thrill is in the battle. But divorce is not all about the lawyer, who often ignores what lies behind the conflict: rage at being left, terror of being poor, and guilt about children. To be fair, lawyers are not trained in psychology or child development; maybe that's the problem. People who divorce need serious attention, from serious professionals, not from someone who thinks that what counts is just the final score.

Linda P. Fish
Englewood, N.J.

GLORY DAYS IN IOWA

Bill Bryson, in his memoir of his sportswriter father, asks why he stayed with the Des Moines *Register* instead of moving to a big-league paper ("The Baseball Writer," April 9th). But the years of his father's tenure, from the thirties to the seventies, were the *Register's* glory days, when the workplace was happy and Pulitzers flowed in. Bryson, Sr., died in 1986, just after Gannett bought the paper, and didn't have to witness the decline that followed. The *Register* was a world-class paper; its atrophy has meant heartbreak for Iowans of a certain age.

Margaret Lacey
Richmond, Ind.

•

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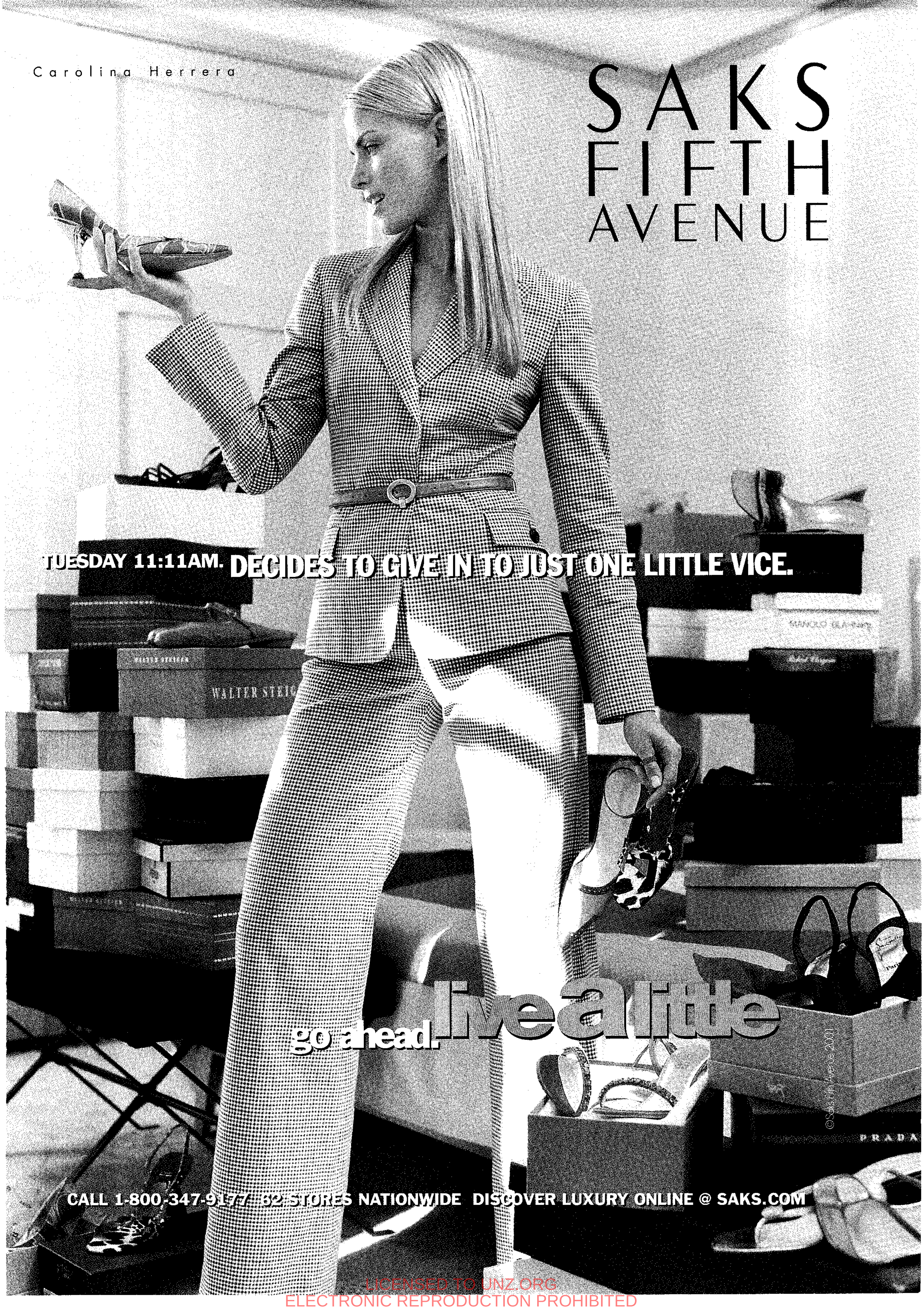
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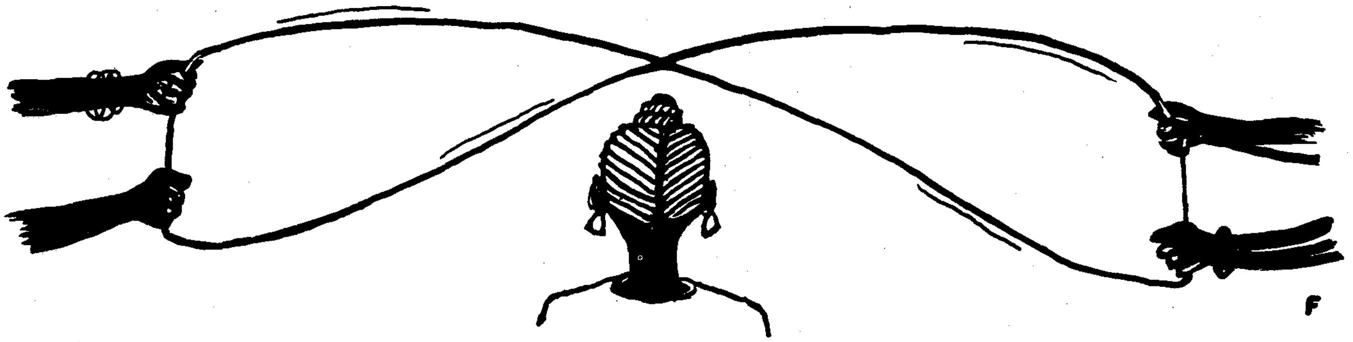


THE THEATRE
OPENINGS & PREVIEWS

Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.

BLUR
A new comedy by Melanie Marnich, in which a teen-ager discovers she's going blind. Polly Draper and Angela Goethals are in the cast. Lynne Meadow is the director. Preview on May 16. Opens May 17 at 7:30. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

BROTHER
A song cycle about love, a collaboration between the composer David Del Tredici and the performance artist John Kelly. Opens May 17 at 8:30 and continues, Wednesdays through Sundays, through May 26. (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288.)

CHAUCER IN ROME
The latest play by John Guare, set in Italy during the final year of the last millennium. Nicholas Martin is the director. In previews. (Mitzi E. Newhouse, 150 W. 65th St. 239-6200.)

THE CREDEAUX CANVAS
Michael Mayer directs a play by Keith Bunin, about three ambitious East Villagers with a scheme. In previews. (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

THE DOG PROBLEM
David Rabe's new play, about a man, his dog, and the Mafia. Joe Pacheco, Larry Clarke, and Andrea Gabriel star. Scott Ellis is the director. In previews. (Atlantic, 336 W. 20th St. 239-6200.)

GLIMMER, GLIMMER & SHINE
From Warren Leight ("Side Man"), a new drama about jazz musicians—twin brothers who were big-band trumpeters together in the fifties. In previews. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

I LOVE AMERICA
For her one-woman show about Dominicans seeking refuge in the United States, Lidia Ramirez conducted dozens of interviews with members of the Coast Guard and with civilians in New York, Puerto Rico, and the Dominican Republic. Previews begin May 17. (American Place Theatre, 111 W. 46th St. 840-3074.)

NOCTURNE
In Adam Rapp's new drama, a young man must deal with the aftermath of his sister's death, which he accidentally caused. Opens May 16 at 7. (New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. 239-6200.)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
20	21	22	16	17	18	19

THIEF RIVER
Gregg Edelman leads the cast in a new play by Lee Blessing, under the direction of Mark Lamos. Jeffrey Stephen Carlson, Frank Converse, Neil Maffin, Remak Ramsay, and Erik Sorensen are in the cast. In previews through May 19. Opens May 20 at 7. (Signature Theatre, 555 W. 42nd St. 244-7529.)

OPENED RECENTLY

AJAX
The Bat Theatre Company presents Alice Tuan's play about a sexual foursome. (Flea Theatre, 41 White St., between Broadway and Church St. 226-2407. Closes May 26.)

BAT BOY: THE MUSICAL
A kind of "My Fair Bat Boy," in which a half-bat, half-man—memorably played by Deven May—emerges from his childhood cave into adult bourgeois life. But the musical world he enters is one of darkness, not light, of ironies, not idealism, where plot is a history of abdications and song extolls the emptiness of all the standard credos—Christianity, family, community, love, redemption—and of the musical itself. It's a jejune vision, but a smart, playful, and funny one nonetheless. (Reviewed in our issue of 4/9/01.) (Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 307-4100.)

BELLS ARE RINGING
Faith Prince and Marc Kudisch lead the cast in a revival of the 1956 Betty Comden–Adolph Green–Jule Styne musical. Tina Landau is the director. (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

THE BOOK OF LIZ
In the latest comedy by the brother-and-sister team of Amy and David Sedaris, Ms. Sedaris portrays the sweating, mousy Elizabeth, a demure Puritan believer from the religious Squeamish Community who goes on a picaresque adventure after being refused the honor of organizing the Chastity Parade. As comic drama, the play is sort of an amateur fizzle, but it does offer the Sedarises the opportunity to tell some very good jokes in silly costumes and to bask in the smug downtown certainty of a soiled world. (4/9/01) (Greenwich House, 27 Barrow St. 239-6200.)

CAVEMAN
The latest play from the pen of Richard Maxwell runs in repertory with his earlier play "Boxing 2000." (SoHo Rep, 46 Walker St. 479-7979. Closes May 19.)

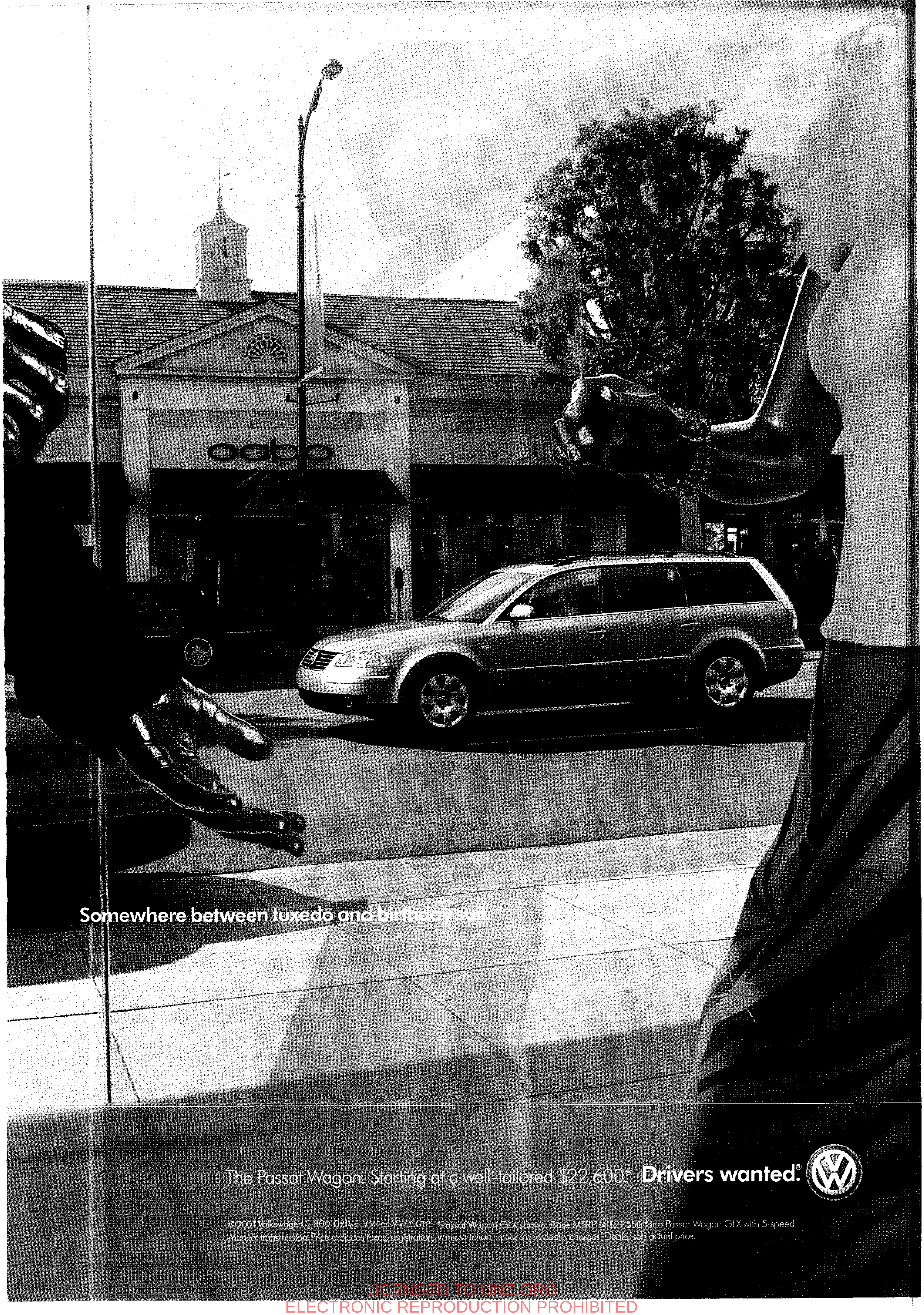
A CLASS ACT
Ed Kleban's life following his success as the lyricist of "A Chorus Line" is the basis of this musical. With songs by Mr. Kleban and a book by Linda Kline and Lonny Price. Mr. Price is the director. (Ambassador, 219 W. 49th St. 239-6200.)

ELI'S COMIN'
The late Laura Nyro's witty, passionate songs first came to public attention in 1968. This cycle of twenty of them, put together by Bruce Buschel and Diane Paulus, manages, without a spoken word, to tell the tale of a woman's life in the city—a tale of fun, temptation, loss, and redemption—without a false note (in any sense). Ms. Paulus's incisive yet subtle direction makes the story vivid enough to hold the evening together without ever displacing the songs themselves from center stage. The terrific Judy Kuhn (from "She Loves Me" and "Les Mis") leads a cast of three other tremendous singer-actresses and Wilson Jermaine Heredia (from "Rent"), who barely sings but is a powerful presence as the source of much temptation. Joe Rubenstein leads the six-member band. (Vineyard Theatre, 108 E. 15th St. 353-0303. Closes June 3.)

ENSEMBLE STUDIO THEATRE
The first series in this year's six-week marathon of one-acts continues through May 20 with plays by Billy Aronson, Tom Coash, David Ives, and Cherie Vogelstein. The marathon continues through June 17. (549 W. 52nd St. 247-4982.)

FOLLIES
This revival of Stephen Sondheim and James Goldman's landmark 1971 musical, which takes place at a reunion of Ziegfeld-like performers, is less lavish than the original production, but no matter: the show's real grandeur lies in its imaginative structure and the unfolding of its lyrically rich, resonant songs. In the hands of Matthew Warchus, who directed, the relentless, unblinking intelligence is intact. The theme of loss and regret is played out in the unhappy marriages of two middle-aged couples, convincingly played by Blythe Danner, Gregory Harrison, Judith Ivey, and Treat Williams, against a backdrop of show-business dreams and promises enacted by performers from a bygone era. (Of these, Marge Champion and Joan Roberts are especially delightful.) You may want your pleasures to be a little less ambiguous than those offered here; it's possible to leave the theatre feeling a little mixed up inside, as though you've just received the most unforgettable parting kiss of your life. (4/23 & 30/01) (Belasco, 111 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

FORTY-SECOND STREET
As a domineering diva who breaks her ankle before the big opening night, the wonderful Christine Ebersole steals the show in this revival of the 1980 tap musical based on the 1933 film. But it has to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be said: it was probably easy to do. As the young chorine who steps in to save the day, Kate Levering doesn't have enough star power to shine above the legions of hoofers who crowd the stage, and Michael Cumpsty, as the gruff director, is sorely miscast. Still, if this sort of show is your cup of tea, the songs are wonderful and the dancing is fine—just know that the cup is not quite full. (Ford Center, 213 W. 42nd St. 307-4100.)

THE GATHERING
Hal Linden portrays a Holocaust survivor in Arje Shaw's drama about three generations of a Jewish family. Rebecca Taylor is the director. (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

GEORGE GERSHWIN ALONE
A one-man portrait with music, written and performed by Hershey Felder and directed by Joel Zwick. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 349-6200.)

THE GOOD THIEF
As the sole character onstage in Conor McPherson's hour-long monologue for an Irishman, Brian d'Arcy James narrates and relives a botched bit of thuggery and its aftermath, in which he accidentally kills a man and flees with the newly widowed, strangely placid Mrs. Mitchell and her small daughter, Neve. It cannot end well for these three, but amid the violence and mayhem—all offstage, summoned by the actor, whose eyes glitter dangerously—there are moments of redemption. (45 Bleecker Theatre, at 45 Bleecker St. 307-4100. Closes May 27.)

THE INVENTION OF LOVE
Tom Stoppard's witty, challenging account of the classicist and poet A. E. Housman and the love that not only dared not speak its name but didn't even have one until 1895 (when the word "homosexual" was coined). Jack O'Brien's well-directed, lucid production features a sumptuous set by Bob Crowley and some fine acting, especially by Richard Easton as the elder/dead Housman—he parses every sentence and joke so that the audience is never at sea—and Robert Sean Leonard as the young classicist in love. David Harbour also turns in a vivid portrait as the sporty object of Housman's platonic affection. (Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

THE IT GIRL
The York Theatre Company presents a musical adaptation of "It," the 1927 movie that made Clara Bow a star. (Theatre at St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. 239-6200. Closes May 27.)

JANE EYRE
John Caird and Paul Gordon's musical is respectful of and faithful to Brontë's original, but it needs to be brilliant and piercing, and it isn't. (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 307-4100.)

KING HEDLEY II
August Wilson's new play, set in Pittsburgh in 1985, is a tale of rage, redemption, and Reaganomics. Its eponymous protagonist, played by Brian Stokes Mitchell, is eager to start anew after emerging from a long prison term for killing a man, but hard times and his own self-destructive ways seem to conspire against him. Despite some good performances by Viola Davis, Stephen McKinley Henderson, and Charles Brown, the play lacks psychological credibility, and its heavy cargo of symbolism and coincidence often makes it feel like a soap opera. Directed by Marion McClinton. (5/14/01) (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200.)

LACKAWANNA BLUES
The prodigiously talented Ruben Santiago-Hudson (who won a basketful of awards several years ago for his performance in August Wilson's "Seven Guitars") tells the story of Nanny, the bighearted woman who helped raise him in an upstate boarding house, and the other characters who lived there. By turns poignant, passionate, and nostalgic, Santiago-Hudson blows haunting, evocative riffs on his harmonica, accompanied by the blues guitar of Bill Sims. The monologue is all about goodness, and Santiago-Hudson honors it with an excellence all his own. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 260-2400. Closes May 20.)

LIPSTICK TRACES
Greil Marcus's paean to punk rock, adapted for the stage by the Austin troupe Rude Mechanicals and presented by the Foundry Theatre. (Ohio Theatre, 66 Wooster St. 800-965-4827.)

LOVE, JANIS
A paean to Janis Joplin, at the spiffy new theatre that was formerly the Village Gate, built around Joplin's songs, writings, and interviews. Though it contains no new insight, it's a useful corrective to the drunken, drug-addicted legend, and the production is a fine one. Randal Myler directed with a sure eye for the telling detail, and the seven-member band really cooks. Two singers alternate as "singing Janis"; on a recent night Cathy Richardson was in splendid voice and demeanor. The backbone of the evening, however, is Catherine Curtin's "speaking Janis." It's an intelligent, vulnerable, self-aware performance that transcends the Janis myth and showcases the talent of a powerful actress. (Village Theatre, 158 Bleecker St. 307-4100.)

MADAME MELVILLE
Macaulay Culkin is a fifteen-year-old American student and Joely Richardson his French teacher, in a drama by Richard Nelson, set in nineteen-sixties Paris. (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.)

MNEMONIC
For sheer theatrical aplomb—the exhilarating marriage of the surreal body to the surreal intellect—nothing can top the latest show by the actor and director Simon McBurney and his Theatre de Complicite. With startling images, sounds, and shifts of focus, three stories unravel with the lucidity, the detachment, and the surprise of a Magritte, to remind us that we ourselves are a work of fiction, and that remembering is an act of imagination. (4/9/01) (John Jay College, 899 Tenth Ave., at 58th St. 239-6200. Closes May 24.)

ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST
Dale Wasserman's severely dated adaptation of Ken Kesey's 1962 novel—a broad allegory, set in a mental hospital, about the perils of nonconformity—is a quaint relic, but as staged by Chicago's excellent Steppenwolf Theatre it's a well-acted one. Gary Sinise leads the cast, as the incorrigible mental patient Randle P. McMurphy. Terry Kinney is the director. (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

PEARL THEATRE COMPANY
Jean-François Regnard's 1708 comedy, "A Will of His Own," runs in repertory with Racine's "Andromache." (80 St. Marks Pl. 598-9802.)

THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY
A stage adaptation by Joe O'Byrne of Oscar Wilde's novel. (Irish Repertory Theatre, 132 W. 22nd St. 727-2737. Closes May 20.)

THE PLAY ABOUT THE BABY
In Edward Albee's new play, an older couple provide a harsh taste of what life has in store for a young couple with a new baby: the ravages of adulthood, the tidal wave of troubles and injuries that come with time. Brian Murray and Marian Seldes, two veterans who are rarely less than riveting, make the most of Albee's sharp, enigmatic writing; their highly stylized, virtuosic performances here are stunning. David Esbjornson directed. (2/19 & 26/01) (Century Center, 111 E. 15th St. 239-6200.)

THE PRODUCERS
Matthew Broderick and Nathan Lane star in Mel Brooks's musical version of his 1968 movie, under the direction of Susan Stroman. (5/7/01) (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

SEE BOB RUN
Daniel MacIvor's drama about a talkative hitchhiker (Susan O'Connor) is back for a limited run. (Rattlestick Theatre, 224 Waverly Pl. 627-2556. Closes June 3.)

SEUSSICAL
For all the whimsy of Theodor Geisel's doggerel, what's missing in this relentlessly cute musical by the team of Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty is mayhem and magic. It's a show with curiously little charm. (12/25/00 & 1/1/01) (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

SHUT UP AND LOVE ME
The performance artist Karen Finley's latest one-woman show. Wednesdays through Sundays at 8, through June 2. (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288.)

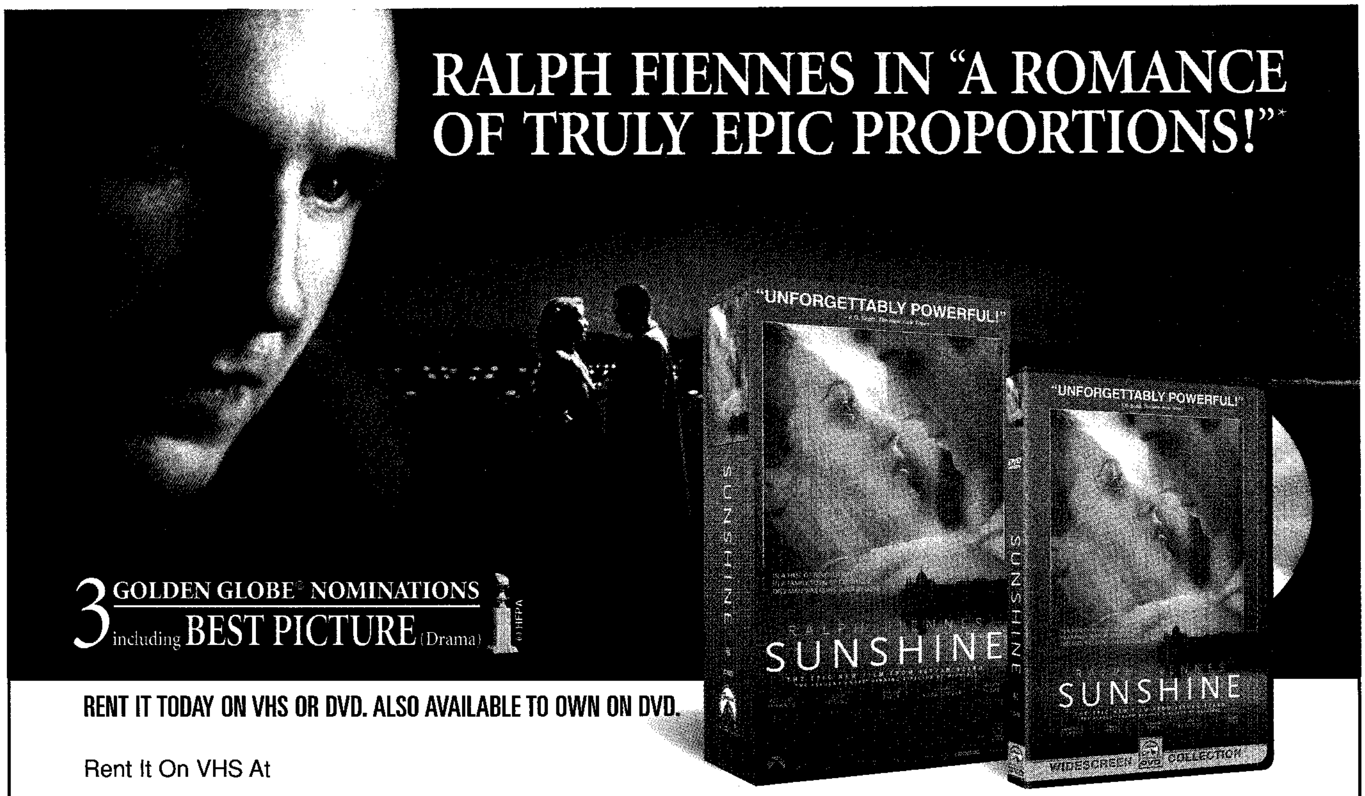
SINCERITY FOREVER
A Bat Theatre Company revival of Mac Wellman's 1991 play. (Flea Theatre, 41 White St., between Broadway and Church St. 226-2407. Closes May 26.)

A SKULL IN CONNEMARA
The middle play in Martin McDonagh's Leenane trilogy. Like the others, it is permeated by violence, decay, death, and humor—humor that, in this case, is predominantly of the patronizing, stage-Irish variety and saturated in alcohol. Gordon Edelstein directed. (3/5/01) (Gramercy, 127 E. 23rd St. 777-4900. Closes May 27.)

STONES IN HIS POCKETS
Marie Jones's play, which began life in Belfast a couple of years ago, is set in an Irish village where a big-budget Hollywood movie is being made. Conleth Hill and Seán Campion play two extras in the movie and all thirteen other characters as well, including the movie's female star, its director, and various locals. Though the play has its clever ways when it comes to sending up both Hollywood and Irish mores, the stories told here aren't anything you haven't seen before. Still, Hill and Campion, under the direction of Ian McElhinney, go at their parts with such relish that the evening has an almost vaudevillian theatricality about it. (4/16/01) (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

UNCLE BOB
In a new play by Austin Pendleton, George Morfogen portrays a man dying of AIDS and Gale Harold his homophobic nephew. (SoHo Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. 239-6200.)

URINETOWN: THE MUSICAL
A musical comedy by Mark Hollmann and Greg Kotis, about a city in a state of ecological disaster. John Rando is the director. (American Theatre of Actors, 314 W. 54th St. 239-6200.)



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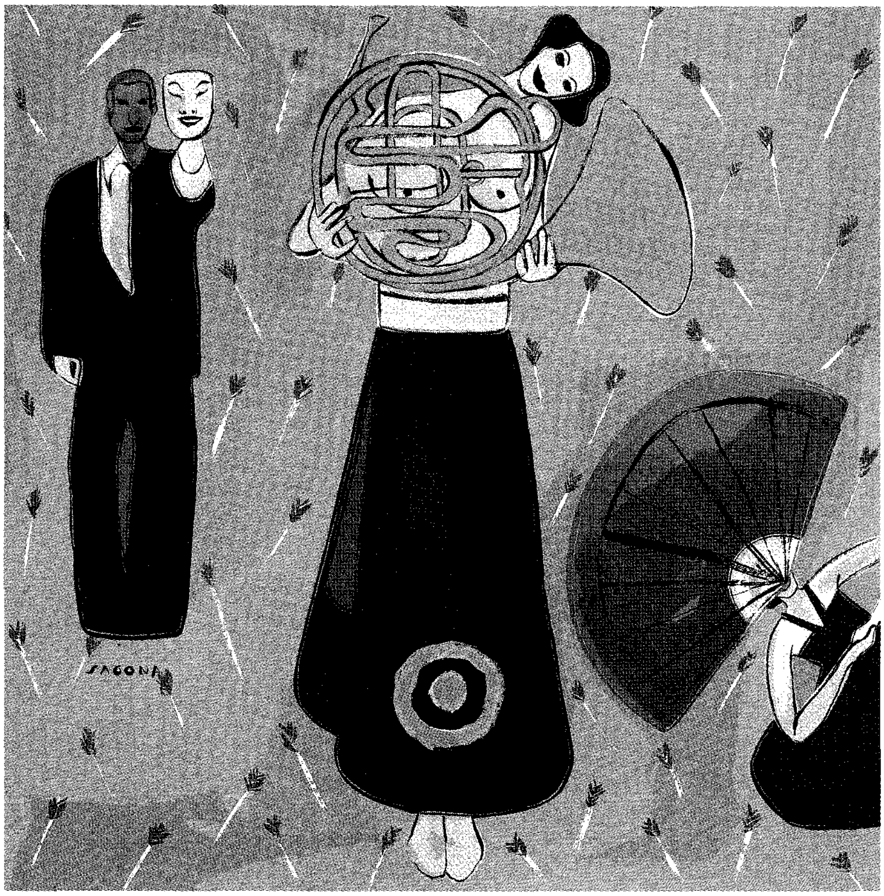
LONG RUNS

AIDA
Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 307-4747.
ANNIE GET YOUR GUN
Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST
Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 307-4747.
BLUE MAN GROUP/TUBES
Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370.
CABARET
Studio 54, at 254 W. 54th St. 239-6200.
KISS ME, KATE
Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200.
THE LION KING
New Amsterdam, 214 W. 42nd St. 307-4100.
LES MISÉRABLES
Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200.
THE MUSIC MAN
Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 307-4100.
PERFECT CRIME
Duffy, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. 695-3401.
THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200.
PROOF
Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200.
RENT
Nederlander, 208 W. 41st St. 921-8000.



"/Asunder," choreographed by Yin Mei, at Danspace Project.

MARINA SAGONA

CHICAGO
Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200.
CONTACT
Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.
DE LA GUARDA
Daryl Roth, 20 Union Sq. E., at 15th St. 239-6200.
THE DINNER PARTY
Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200.
DINNER WITH FRIENDS
Variety Arts, 110 Third Ave., at 14th St. 239-6200. (Closes May 27.)
THE FANTASTICKS
Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838.
FORBIDDEN BROADWAY 2001: A SPOOF ODYSSEY
Stardust, Broadway at 51st St. 239-6200.
FOSSE
Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200.
THE FULL MONTY
Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 239-6200.
FULLY COMMITTED
Cherry Lane Theatre, 38 Commerce St. 239-6200. (Closes May 27.)
THE ROCKY HORROR SHOW
Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200.
THE SEARCH FOR SIGNS OF INTELLIGENT LIFE IN THE UNIVERSE
Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200. (Closes May 20.)
STOMP
Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 477-2477.
THE SYRINGA TREE
Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 307-4100.
THE TALE OF THE ALLERGIST'S WIFE
Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200.
TONY N' TINA'S WEDDING
St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St. 239-6200.
THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES
Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 239-6200.

DANCE

NEW YORK CITY BALLET
May 16 at 8: "Jeu de Cartes," "Morgen," and "Tchaikovsky Suite No. 3." ♦ May 17 at 8: "La Source," "Appalachia Waltz," and "The Four Seasons." ♦ May 18 at 8: "Concerti Armonici," "Moves," and "Firebird." ♦ May 19 at 2: "Appalachia Waltz," "Morgen," and "La Valse." ♦ May 19 at 8: "Concerti Armonici," "Moves," and "Tchaikovsky Suite No. 3." ♦ May 20 at 3: "Fanfare," "Appalachia Waltz," and "Firebird." ♦ May 22 at 8: "Swan Lake," "Appalachia Waltz," and "Firebird." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Through July 1.)

AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE
May 16 at 2 and 8 and May 17 at 8: "Giselle." ♦ May 18-19 and May 21-22 at 8: "La Bayadère, Act II" and "The Pied Piper." ♦ May 19 at 2: "Rodeo" and "The Pied Piper." (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000. Through June 23.)

EIFMAN BALLET OF ST. PETERSBURG
The refreshingly grandiloquent choreographer Boris Eifman takes on two full-length works: "Don Juan & Molière," which presents a battle between shades of the creative subconscious (Mozart plays when Don Juan appears, and Berlioz plays for Molière), and "Russian Hamlet," which recasts Prince Paul, the only son of Catherine the Great, in the moody and self-torturing role. (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212. May 18 at 8, May 19 at 2 and 8, and May 20 at 2.)

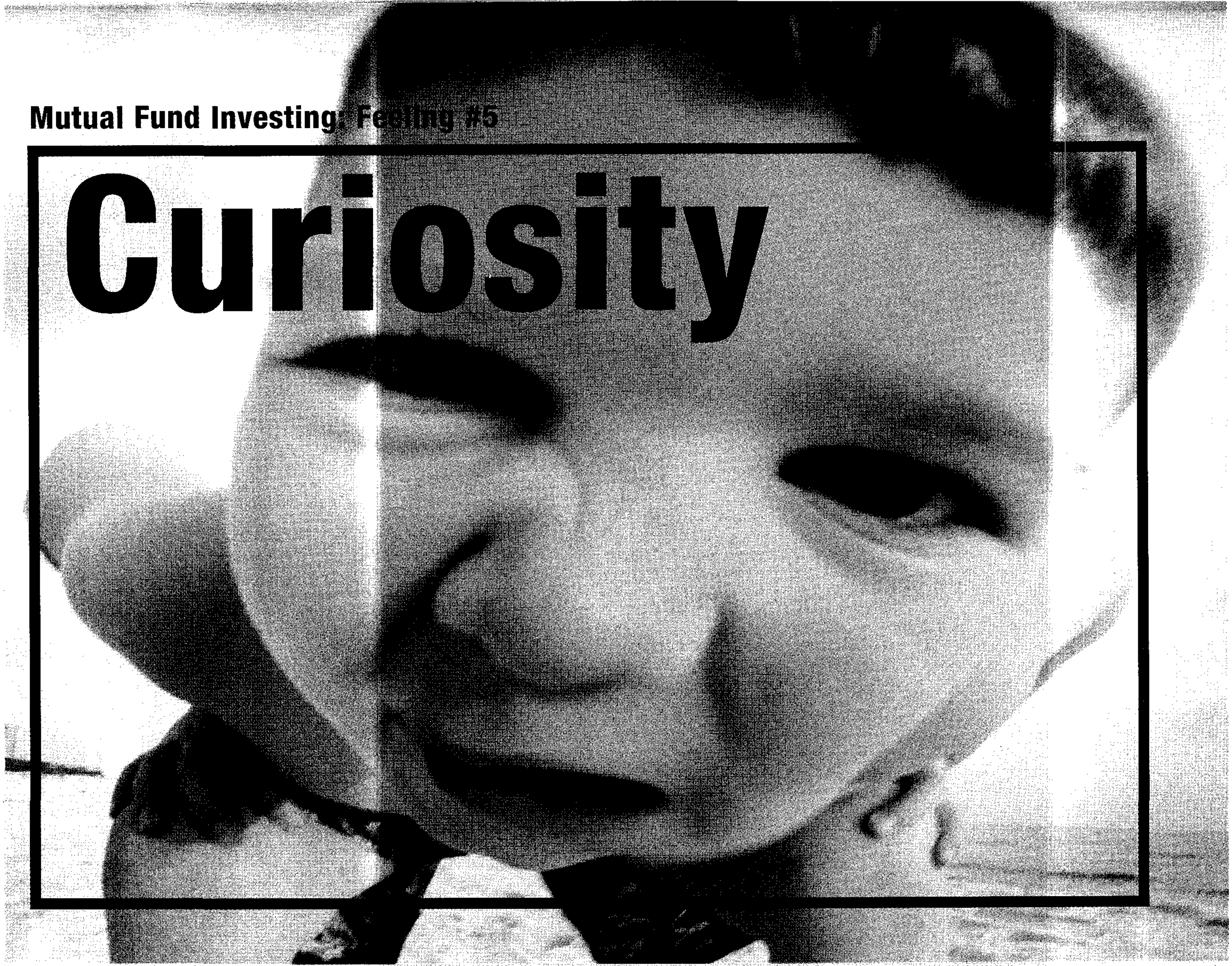
DANCE BRAZIL
The company, under the direction of Jelon Viera, performs two new works: one relies on choreographed capoeira, the Brazilian dance-based martial art; the other, "The Ritual of the Divinities," reinterprets candomblé rites, based on African rituals. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. May 15-19 at 8 and May 20 at 2 and 7:30. Through May 26.)

"CRASH TEST DUMMIES"
The dance and performance troupe Antigravity presents a full-length work involving extreme product testing: catapulting onto mattresses, spinning upside down on test helmets, flying while wrapped in cellophane. (New Victory, 209 W. 42nd St. 239-6200. May 18 at 7, May 19 at 2 and 7, and May 20 at noon and 5. Through June 3.)

"TATTOO"
The dance begins and ends with two women walking across the stage dressed in nothing but black body paint. These quasi-Aboriginal designs are a kind of "urban stamping," the Seattle-based choreographer Pat Graney says. The other stamping comes from the feet. In short, enigmatic scenes that open and close with sudden blackouts and silence, the five women beat out tight rhythms in forties-style office shoes or electronic skirts wired to platform boots. At times, their bodies are stiff and upright and the steps small and slippery; at others, the torsos arc and swing wildly above staccato legs. Amy Denio's percussive score shifts swiftly as the dance moves from Dreamtime to memory to an explosive present. (The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793. May 16-19 at 8.)

"/ASUNDER"
The slash in the title, the choreographer Yin Mei explains, "is like holding your breath before you act. It's a pause where you recognize where you are." Her meditative dance is inspired by the Ming-dynasty poet Xu Wen Chang's tale of an ambitious Buddhist monk who ruins his chances for enlightenment by falling in love. Reincarnated as a prostitute, she finally sees that the quest for emptiness in her previous life was another form of lust. "/Asunder" breaks Xu's story into pieces, and each member of a multinational cast, including the magnetic Javanese dancer Miroto, elaborates a fragment. Cai Guo-Qiang, whose fishing-boat installation "Borrowing Your Enemy's Arrows" recently hung above the MOMA lobby, contributes a thousand pink-feathered arrows. (Danspace Project, St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. 674-8194. May 17-19 at 8:30 and May 20 at 7:30.)

"RENDER"
Koosil-ja Hwang and her five-member company, Dance Kumikokimoto, use dance, text, video, and electronica as part of "Pulse: A Festival of Digitally Inspired Performance," presented in conjunction with "Bitstreams," the Whitney Museum's exhibition of digital art. (Whitney Museum at Philip Morris, 120 Park Ave., at 42nd St. 878-2550. May 17 at 8:30.)



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ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NIGHT LIFE
CONCERT

TOOL
After an extended absence, America's favorite cryptic cybermetal band returns, and they're as spooky as ever. Hot on the heels of "Salival," a multimedia boxed set full of the band's icky videos, and in anticipation of the release of its new album, "Lateralus," this quartet will do its austere best to thoroughly creep out everyone within eye- and earshot. (Hammerstein Ballroom, Manhattan Center, 311 W. 34th St. 564-4882. May 20 at 8.)

CLUBS

Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it's advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.

B. B. KING BLUES CLUB & GRILL
237 W. 42nd St. (997-4144)—May 16: A rare visit from the **Mahotella Queens.** This vocal trio first came together in the mid-sixties, and was for a long time the backing band for the singer Simon (Mahlatini) Nkabinde, the Lion of Soweto, who died two years ago. Backed by a tight band of young lads, the Queens carry on with their mastery of *mbaaqanga*, the leg-shaking music of urban South Africa which they helped pioneer and is familiar to fans of Paul Simon's album "Graceland." Their show is as groovy and intricate as their traditional dress is colorful. May 17-19: **B. B. King.** The man who's done the most to bring the blues to those who might otherwise never have heard the music of the rural South enjoys the fruits of his fame, with a three-night run at his posh Times Square home. He turns seventy-six in September, for goodness' sake—see him while you can. May 22: **George Thorogood.** Swaggering manfully into his fifth decade of celebrating pool-hustling tough guys with large capacities for alcohol and soft spots for the ladies, Delaware's finest slide guitarist returns to New York with his Destroyers. Expect him to do precisely what the name of his band implies, and precious little else.

BOWERY BALLROOM
6 Delancey St. (533-2111)—May 22: **Rufus Wainwright** possesses one of pop's most distinctive and unusual voices—he sings with the brashness of Ethel Merman and the raucous kick of Peter Allen—and this piano man's strongly emotional songs show a cinematic, lyrical grasp of unrequited love which can make you swoon.

BROWNIES
169 Avenue A, at 10th St. (420-8392)—May 19: The **Zambonis,** a Connecticut-based quartet who write songs exclusively about ice hockey, may sound like a simple novelty act, but they score repeatedly with a bunch of snappy little power-pop songs. With **Les Sans Culottes,** a Brooklyn ensemble that plays raunchy faux-French rock that's both a sendup of and a tribute to late-period Serge Gainsbourg and punchy *yé-yé* girl pop.

IRVING PLAZA
17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (777-6800)—May 16-17: **Tortoise,** the revered post-rock experimental ensemble from Chicago, stops by with songs from its new album, "Standards." May 22: The up-and-coming soul singer **Sunshine Anderson,** who is managed by Macy Gray. ♦ The Swing Dance Society gathers here every Sunday, with sets from eight until midnight. For information on the Society, call 696-9737.

KNITTING FACTORY
74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—May 21: **Cinerama.** Since putting the Wedding Present, his prototypical indie band, on hiatus in 1997, the British songsmith Dave Gedge has replaced his punky guitar fixation with this romantic side project. It features his girlfriend, Sally Murrell, and it owes more to the whimsy of "The Umbrellas of Cherbourg" than to the frantic angst of the Buzzcocks.

TABLES FOR TWO

OUEST
2315 Broadway, at 84th St. (580-8700)—A natty red awning stretches clear to the street, inviting carriage-pushing, scooter-riding, Zabar's-loving Upper West Siders to take a peek at Ouest's handsome, clubby décor. This brand-new restaurant ("pronounced West," a sign in the window says helpfully) seems endearingly oblivious to the neighborhood's long-standing indifference to stylish dining. Two days after its opening, the chef, Tom Valenti, sat at the small bar staring intently at one of the crimson-and-gold-striped silk lanterns that hang from the ceiling like rep ties. Later, he stopped in front of a row of sexy red-leather banquettes, lined above by six-foot mahogany-framed mirrors, and scrutinized the lantern again. "Is it crooked?" he asked. It looked great. The whole place did, including the big boutonnière of cherry blossoms, lilacs, and hydrangeas which stood sentinel at the door.

Does the Upper West Side deserve such sophistication? There's really no kind way to tell a neighborhood that a restaurant is too good for it, but some practical advice is in order: dress *up* a little, for God's sake, and leave the kids at home—along with that the-world-is-my-living-room attitude!

Ouest clearly has more than good looks going for it. Valenti has been with a number of terrific restaurants, notably Alison on Dominick, so he's used to adulation for his robust yet lovely way with classic food. Nothing is overly fancy here—short ribs with polenta, skate with cabbage, rabbit with spring vegetables—but it's just fancy enough. To start, Valenti piles thin slices of creamy gravlax on a rustic chickpea pancake with caviar and mustard oil, or pan-singes a terrine of potatoes, truffles, and goat cheese and serves it with a dice of sweet marinated beets and bitter dandelion greens. His simple roast chicken is just right (it comes with mashed potatoes, shiitake mushrooms, and soft cloves of roasted garlic), but his best entrée may be the roasted salmon, which is crispy on the outside and smoky flavored, in a caviar-spiked remoulade.

Desserts are at once plain and decadent: a dense, cupcake-size chocolate cake with homemade banana ice cream and a few dots of cocoa sauce, a salty-sweet rhubarb crisp with the most intensely flavored buttermilk ice cream imaginable, passion-fruit panna cotta. The menu also caters to people who don't like their peas to touch their potatoes, or their steak piled on their starch, with a selection of simple grills—chops, steaks, chicken—which you can complement with such sides as braised savoy cabbage, soft polenta, or creamed spinach. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays for dinner only. Entrées $15-$28.)

—*Emily Nunn*

VILLAGE UNDERGROUND
130 W. 3rd St. (777-7745)—May 18: **Hamell on Trial.** A thorny folk troubadour who traded in his Pete Seeger records for albums by Lou Reed and Iggy Pop, Ed Hamell delivers dicey urban narratives like a one-man Scorsese flick. With an admirable capacity for detail and the punchy delivery of the Jim Carroll Band circa "People Who Died," Hammell is both an ace storyteller and a credible rocker, which is no mean feat.

WETLANDS
161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—May 20: **Agnostic Front.** Vintage hard-core punk returns to the hippie-friendly confines of this downtown club as New York's once-premier squad of scowling, large-booted behemoths take the stage, much to the nostalgic delight of teary-eyed skinheads in ill-fitting T-shirts.

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

BAM CAFÉ
30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (718-636-4139)—May 17: **Matthew Shipp** is the tenor terrorist David S. Ware's pianist and an integral component in orchestrating the celebratory squall that arises out of Ware's quartet. On his own, Shipp can balance his post-Cecil Taylor keyboard eruptions with pools of lyric calm—or, depending on his mood, not.

BIRDLAND
315 W. 44th St. (581-3080)—May 18-19: The **Christian McBride** Band. A colossal talent who's still finding his way as a bandleader, the bassist McBride remains as besotted with James Brown as he is with Ray Brown; the tension between the funk and jazz traditions gives his work a delicious, if not quite balanced, edge. Dining.

BLUE NOTE
131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Through May 20: The **Jackie McLean** quintet and the **Phil Woods** quartet. In the fifties, alto saxophonist McLean was a sideman on early Miles Davis sessions; by the sixties, players like the iconoclastic Ornette Coleman had appeared as sidemen on McLean recordings. Having kept himself in the fray for decades, McLean is now a compact compendium of modern jazz. His range erases the distinctions between bop, hard bop, and modal playing. / Woods breathes bop. An alto saxophonist who speaks fluent Parker while indulging his own alternately flashy and ripely romantic take on the music, Woods—forty years down the line—is playing better than ever. He's also held down a tightly coiled small band for some three decades which is founded on Woods's now symbiotic relationship with his longtime drummer, Bill Goodwin.

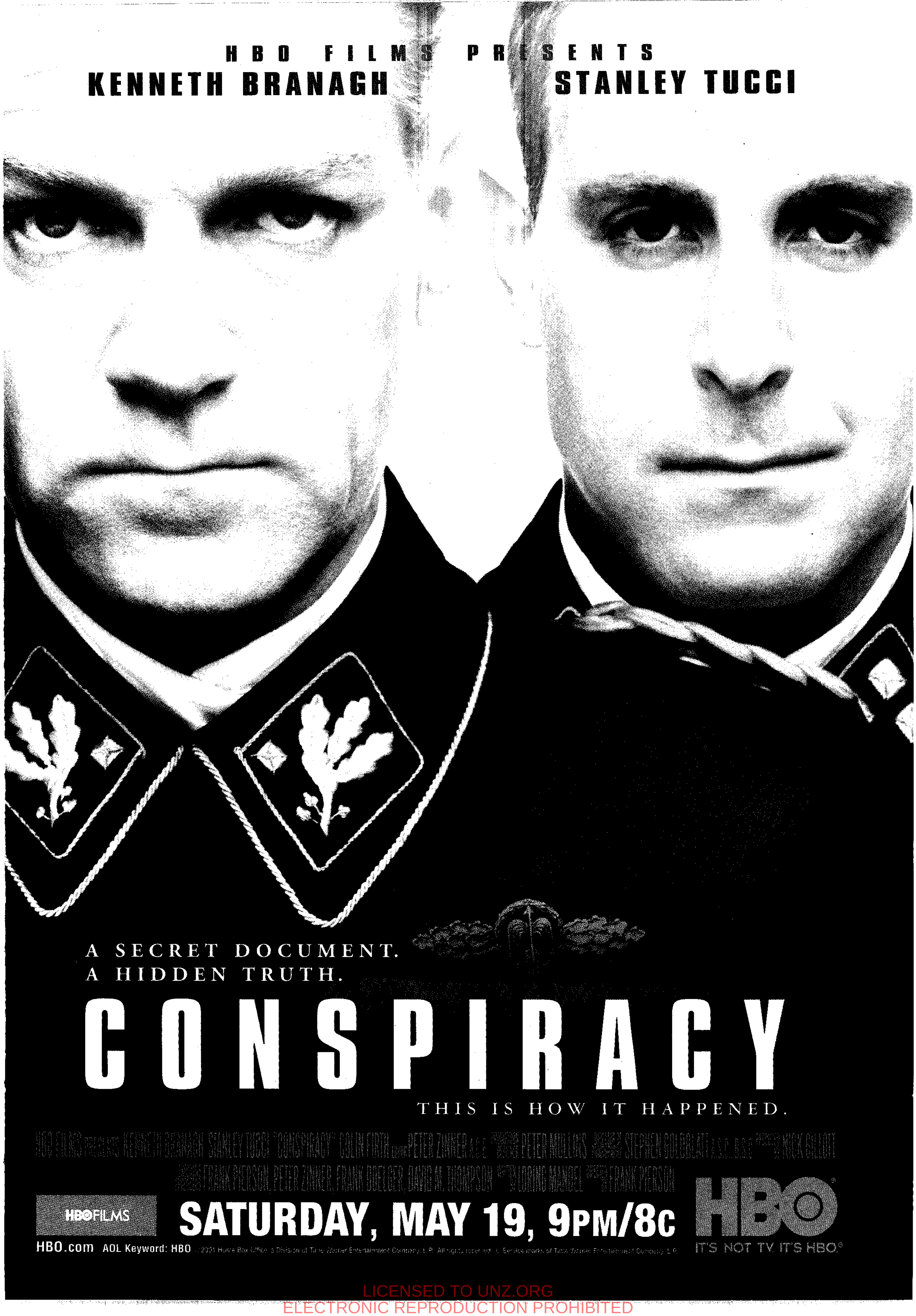
CARLYLE HOTEL
Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle, a snug, windowless enclave in the doorman district, features discreet waiters, wraparound pastel murals, and, through June 23, the magisterially puckish **Bobby Short.** ♦ Across the hall, in Bemelmans Bar, **Barbara Carroll** is in attendance at the piano through June 23.

FEINSTEIN'S AT THE REGENCY
540 Park Ave., at 61st St. (339-4095)—Playing straight woman to her then-husband Louis Prima during that wild man's fifties heyday gave **Keely Smith** (here through May 26) permanent neo-hipster status, but her superior talents as a mainstream vocalist are still undervalued. "Keely Sings Sinatra," a stirring recording of favorites of the Chairman of the Board, provides the focus for this welcome return to a major New York City club.

IRIDIUM
48 W. 63rd St. (582-2121)—Through May 20: The **Ravi Coltrane** quintet. By taking on the tenor and soprano saxophones just like his father, John, Ravi Coltrane hasn't made it easy for himself. But he has survived his apprenticeship years with distinction and individuality. He has a winning combination of a full-throated horn sound and a healthy urge to sidestep the mainstream. Mondays belong to the electric-guitar innovator **Les Paul.**

JAZZ GALLERY
290 Hudson St., near Spring St. (242-1063)—May 17: Not every pianist finds inspiration in the sanctioned Hancock-Tyner-Evans axis. Two left-field players—**James Hurt** and **Richard Harper**—join forces for the latest edition of the Four Hands/88 Keys series. May 21: The trombonist **Frank Lacy** (here on Mondays), who's worked with McCoy Tyner, Steve Turre, and other jazz notables, turns on the heat with his own band, the fourteen-piece Vibe Tribe.

JAZZ STANDARD
116 E. 27th St. (576-2232)—Through May 20: The **Jane Ira Bloom** quartet. A formidable improviser with a full-blooded tone that sets her apart from the lightweight and/or Coltrane-obsessed soprano-sax players clogging the airwaves, Bloom



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has been even more adventurous recently, testing herself against edgier players and succeeding admirably. Dining.

KNITTING FACTORY

74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—What **Evan Parker** draws from his saxophones would haunt a more conservative player's nightmares. Employing stupendous technical resources, this British upstart has been shaking up the new-jazz horn language since the sixties; he's an unreconstituted legend. The drummer **Mark Sanders,** the bassist **Drew Gress,** and fellow saxophone anarchist **Tim Berne** join him on May 16. He presents one of his dazzling solo recitals on the following night. May 19: The saxophonist **Oliver Lake** has been surprising and enchanting us with his take on free jazz, gospel, reggae, and what have you since he came to town by way of St. Louis back in the early seventies, and he's not about to slacken the pace now. This mainstay of the World Saxophone Quartet and freelance bandleader presents his new Spirit Moves Ensemble.

VILLAGE VANGUARD

178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Through May 20: The **Terence Blanchard** quintet. On his new album, "Let's Get Lost," the trumpeter Terence Blanchard has an all-star vocal entourage to assist him in saluting the composer Jimmy McHugh. Don't expect Diana Krall, Cassandra Wilson, Jane Monheit, or Dianne Reeves to make this gig, but there's still much pleasure to be had in the leader's virile and virtuosic improvisations. The **Vanguard Jazz Orchestra** holds sway on Mondays.

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MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM

Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (879-5500)—With fifteen paintings by Vermeer (and possibly a sixteenth, "Young Woman Seated at a Virginal," which has his luminously impersonal touch), five by the tragically short-lived Fabritius, who may have been his teacher, and ten by his great rival De Hooch, **"Vermeer and the Delft School"** offers an encyclopedic look at the milieu that formed the calmest genius of the seventeenth century. This is the Met at its best: a stately procession of masterpieces, accompanied by informative, sometimes tart commentary. Through May 27. ♦ With a consort of starstruck press and film clips and more than eighty original outfits, **"Jacqueline Kennedy: The White House Years"** reminds viewers of the sensuous, almost brash propriety of the "Jackie look." The essentials are familiar: big buttons, solid colors, carefully chosen fabrics (breathtaking pink-and-white raffia lace for a dinner in Paris; spartan black Alaskine for an audience with the Pope). But their minimalist glamour remains bewitching, and it's moving to see, in the First Lady's handwritten letters to Oleg Cassini and other collaborators, her combination of meticulous planning and self-mockery. "Dear Marta," a letter to a Bergdorf's saleswoman begins, "Here goes—an order for a million hats." Through July 29. ♦ **"William Blake"** includes more than a hundred and seventy-five works by the British painter, printmaker, and poet. Through June 24. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:30, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 9.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—**"About Face,"** an exhibition of more than fifty works from the museum's collection, includes "The Weeping Woman," Picasso's 1939 portrait of Dora Maar, as well as faces by Edvard Munch ("The Sick Child"), Max Beckmann ("Self-Portrait with Bowler Hat"), and Sherrie Levine's remake of Marcel Duchamp's take on the "Mona Lisa." Through June 5. (Open Saturdays through Tuesdays, and Thursdays, 10:30 to 5:45; Fridays, 10:30 to 8:15.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM

Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (423-3500)—**"Frank Gehry: Architect"** opens May 18. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 9 to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, 9 to 8.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART

Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-3676)—**"BitStreams,"** the museum's survey of digitally enhanced art work, features photographs, videos, digitally designed sculptures, and a generous sampling of sound works. Through June 10. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, and weekends, 11 to 6, Fridays, 1 to 9.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM AT PHILIP MORRIS

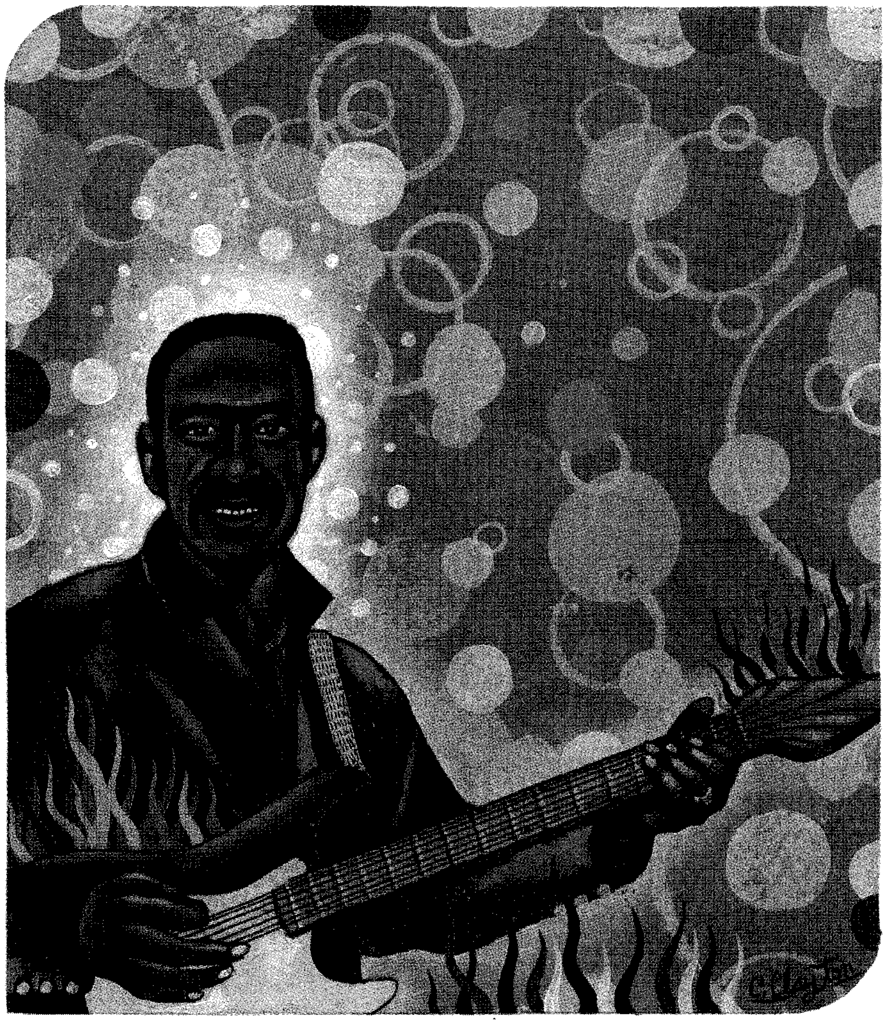
120 Park Ave., at 42nd St. (878-2550)—Minimalism goes military in this stunning installation by Do-Ho Suh, a Korean-born, New York-based artist. Approximately a hundred thousand metal dog tags tile the gallery floor, overlapping like serpent scales. In the center of the room the tags rise to form a monumental T, conjuring ceremonial armor or an imperial robe. Like a warrior-king with outstretched arms, the site-specific sculpture is both formidable and benevolent. The back side of the object is slit, revealing a mirrored interior that turns viewers' reflections into a lining, just as the anonymous legions implied by the dog tags create the garment itself. Through June 29. (Open weekdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 7:30.)

BROOKLYN MUSEUM OF ART

Eastern Parkway (718-638-5000)—It's hard to imagine a more eclectic exhibition than **"A Family Album: Brooklyn Collects,"** which culls art works from more than eighty lenders with ties to the borough. The premise may be a fund-raising ploy, but the result is anarchy of the highest calibre. Wandering from a Pontormo Madonna to a Balthus nymphet and from Chinese antiquities to central-Asian textiles, one feels happily bewildered by the diversity of aesthetic stimuli. Through July 1. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

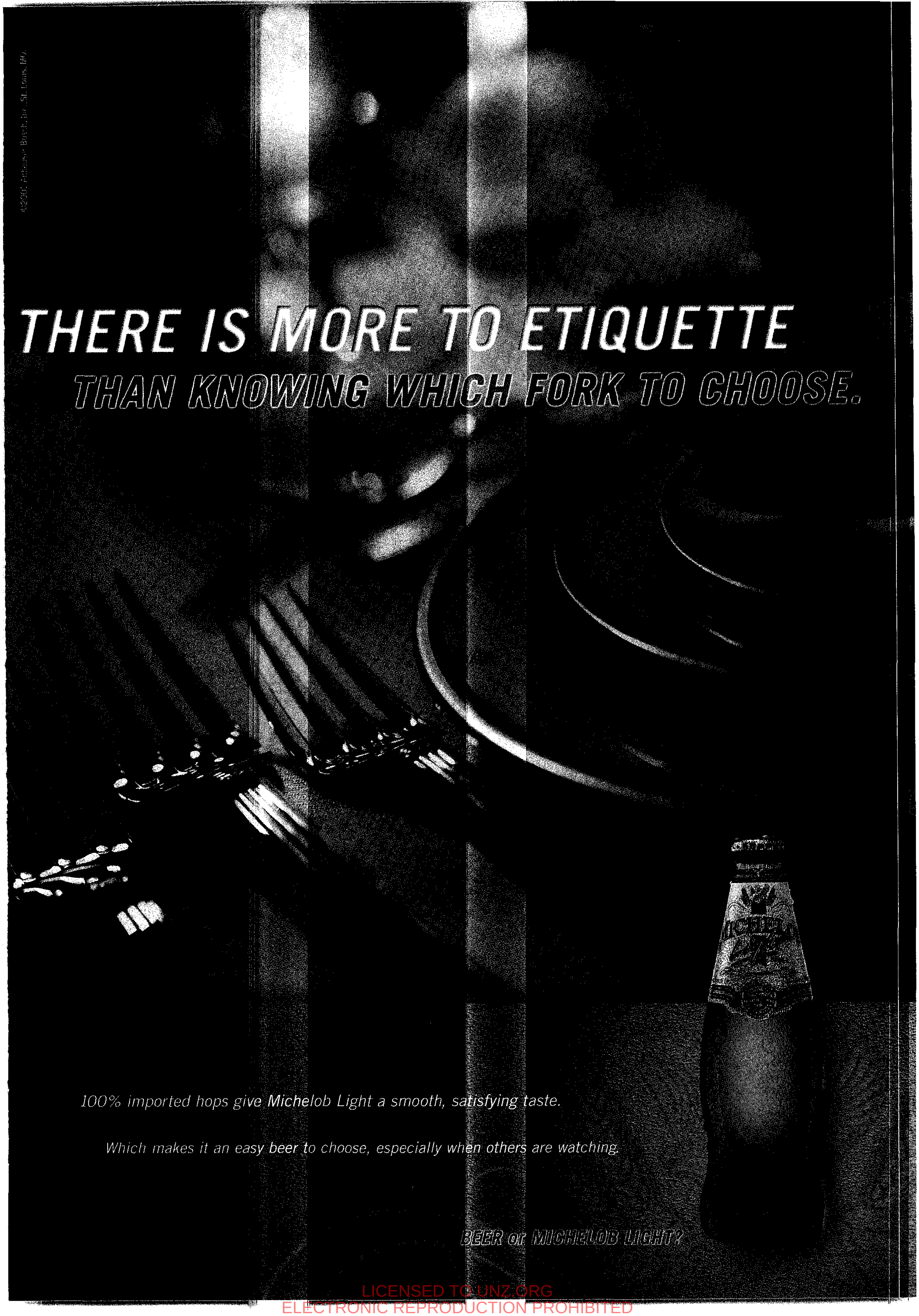
COOPER-HEWITT NATIONAL DESIGN MUSEUM

Fifth Ave. at 91st St. (849-8300)—**"Rooms with a View"** surveys the history of landscape wallpapers, from Belle Époque vignettes of cozy ruins to the magnificent three-hundred-and-sixty-degree panoramas of the middle of the nineteenth century. Three superb examples of the latter occupy rooms of their own. It's hard to say which is the loveliest, but the exquisite craftsmanship of Zuber and Cie's 1849 "El Dorado" or Dufour's 1825 "Vues d'Italie" (thirty-three panels printed in seven shades of ochre!) make the subsequent sampling of quasi-abstract twentieth-century designs seem almost insultingly meagre. Through Oct. 14. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)



IKE'S BOOGIE *Fifty years after he helped create what's widely regarded as the first rock-and-roll record, Jackie Brenston's "Rocket 88," Ike Turner is back on tour (he plays the Village Underground on May 22nd), in support of a new album, "Here and Now," which includes a raucous new version of "Rocket 88." Thanks to his former partner Tina's autobiography, Ike may forever be associated with spousal abuse, but, as his recent performance at the South by Southwest music festival, in Austin, Texas, proves, he's still a great artist, still capable of producing spectacular rhythm and blues that retains the spirit of early rock.*

CHRISTIAN CLAYTON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BEER or MICHELOB LIGHT?

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FRICK COLLECTION
1 E. 70th St. (288-0700)—A word to the smart: a half-mile south of the Met, where people swarm like ants at a picnic around the fifteen Vermeers in "Vermeer and the Delft School," the Frick has hung its three pictures by the Master for rarely crowded, easy looking. Only the large "Mistress and Maid," in which fresh mail arrives for a letter-writing woman, is topnotch. Its dark ground absorbs the magical glow that the woman's flesh and yellow jacket keep radiating. But "Officer and Laughing Girl" and "Girl Interrupted at Her Music," both set in the artist's familiar windowed corner, are a rewarding little pair. The first seems disagreeably glary until you realize that it depicts the direct rays of the setting sun. (The giddy couple will have to fumble for a lamp in a few minutes.) In the second, the pretty music student gazes out past us in pale light, conveying a morning mood of having all the time in the world. Like fractals, the slightest things in Vermeer can unfold the whole of his genius to a sufficiently patient viewer. Through May 27. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

"Giancarlo" (2000), from Lee Friedlander's "Grand Children" (see Photography).

GALLERIES–UPTOWN

Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.

THOMAS POLLOCK ANSHUTZ
With its torpid, handsome images of boaters and bathers at the Jersey shore, "Painting Arcadia" shows the Philadelphia-based Anshutz (1851-1912) in a relaxed, almost summery mood. Anshutz studied with Thomas Eakins, and shared his predilection for images of nude urchins. But these watercolors and plein-air oil sketches have little of Eakins's quirky severity. The best of them, especially a tiny, scraggly study of trees, show a conscientious talent working hard to loosen up. Through June 1. (Graham, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St. 535-5767.)

RICHARD MAURY
An American with a Dutch temperament living in Italy, Maury paints cool, daylit interiors. Nothing much happens in them, but when it does—when, for example, Maury plunks a nude young woman down into a chair—it seems shockingly wrong, a violation of his own empirical spirit, which thrives by rendering mute household events with sotto-voce finesse. Through May 25. (Forum, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 355-4545.)

JOEL SHAPIRO
If Buster Keaton had gone to art school, the results might resemble the shtick-figure sculpture of this pioneering post-minimalist. For nearly two decades Shapiro has employed a stripped-down vocabulary of rectilinear forms—sometimes wooden blocks, in this case bronze bars—in playful but rigorous abstract sculptures that invite anthropomorphic interpretation. This show opens with three free-standing works, then gives way to a group of small-scale objects installed on pedestals of varying heights. The gleeful throng suggests a yoga class for robots or a rousing rendition of the Royal Canadian Air Force exercises performed by escapees from international signage. Through May 26. (Pace Wildenstein, 32 E. 57th St. 421-3292.)

WAYNE THIEBAUD
Back in the sixties, Thiebaud's paintings of custards, cakes, hot dogs, and cream pies were gobbled up by a public eager for wry, recognizable icons. Critics—and who can blame them?—linked his sweets to Oldenberg's spoons and Warhol's soup cans. By now, though, it seems clear that Thiebaud never had much in common with the nouvelle cuisine of Pop art. A glance at his subsequent paintings of vertiginous San Francisco streets and sherbety farmland reminds us that Thiebaud's sunniness is irony-free. He's a traditionalist, albeit one with a light heart and a deliciously heavy touch. Through July 12. (Stone, 113 E. 90th St. 987-4997.)

Short List

LOUISE BOURGEOIS
C & M, 45 E. 78th St. 861-0020.
Through June 9.
BERNARD CHAET
David Findlay, 41 E. 57th St. 486-7660.
Through June 2.
SUSANNA COFFEY
De Nagy, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 262-5050.
Through June 1.
INKA ESSENHIGH
Mary Boone, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.
752-2929. Through June 23.
JOHN MOORE
Hirschl and Adler, 21 E. 70th St. 535-8810.
Through June 1.
RON MUECK
James Cohan, 41 W. 57th St. 755-7171.
Through June 16.

GALLERIES–CHELSEA

WAYNE GONZALES
More than forty small drawings have been installed in the intimate back galleries of Paula Cooper's ancillary space. The close quarters suit the subject matter: conspiracy, specifically the Kennedy assassination. Portraits of Jack Ruby and Lee Harvey Oswald alternate with renditions of documents such as Oswald's marriage certificate. The palette shifts from near-monochrome panels of pink on red or lime on Kelly green to woozy couplings like lilac and turquoise. The condensed scale of the drawings heightens their impact—they're the painting equivalent of a bouillon cube. Through May 26. (521 W. 21st St. 255-1105.)

SEAN LANDERS
With these big, calculatedly dopey Picasso knockoffs, the author of "(Sic)" continues to mine his own narcissism, a mother lode if there ever was one. In the accompanying soundtrack, swelling strings reach a crescendo as Landers intones, "Who is the new Picasso? Ladies and gentlemen, it is I. I am who you're looking for—the most significant artist of my time." It wouldn't be funny if it were remotely possible, but Landers's sitcom persona remains insidiously entertaining. Through May 19. (Rosen, 524 W. 24th St. 627-6000.)

TONY OURSLER
Amityville has nothing on Metro Pictures this month, as Oursler's phantasmagoric video sculptures fill the gallery like a swarm of poltergeists. The spectral objects fall into two categories: earthbound (glass pods encasing projected faces) and airborne (TV antennas, wire screens, and DayGlo Plexiglas fragmenting projections that hover near the ceiling). The soundtracks of each piece—which include phrases like "creeping, creeping, creeping" or "divinely inspired, blow your mind"—merge to form a single, menacing murmur. Through June 16. (519 W. 24th St. 206-7100.)

KATY SCHNEIDER
In this conservative but quietly thrilling New York début, Schneider looks backward, to Manet and Corot, whose painterly touch she has inherited, and also straight ahead, at her swelling belly and child-cluttered household. The resulting works belie their small size and seemingly prosaic subject matter (kids taking a bath, playing dress-up, running around Mom's easel). They are also impressive for what they don't do: dramatize their virtuosity, or mistake sentimentality for warmth. Family values, Schneider suggests, are about learning to love what you've got. Through May 19. (Tatistcheff, 529 W. 20th St. 627-4547.)

"KASMIN'S SIXTIES"
Paul Kasmin acknowledges his pedigree with a time capsule of work shown in his father's influential London gallery in the nineteen-sixties. Among several members of what Clement Greenberg dubbed the color-field school, Kenneth Nolan, Paul Feeley, and Feeley's widow, Helen Frankenthaler, have spare, clean-lined work here, as simultaneously timeless and dated as the Cadillacs of the era. David Hockney's "A Less Realistic Still

Life" is the only figurative painting present; in this company, it looks unsophisticated. Through May 26. (293 Tenth Ave., at 27th St. 563-4474.)

Short List

RICHMOND BURTON
Cheim & Read, 521 W. 23rd St.
242-7727. Through June 9.
GLENN LIGON
D'Amelio Terras, 525 W. 22nd St.
352-9460. Through June 9.
CHRISTOPHER WOOL
Luhring Augustine, 531 W. 24th St.
206-9100. Through June 16.

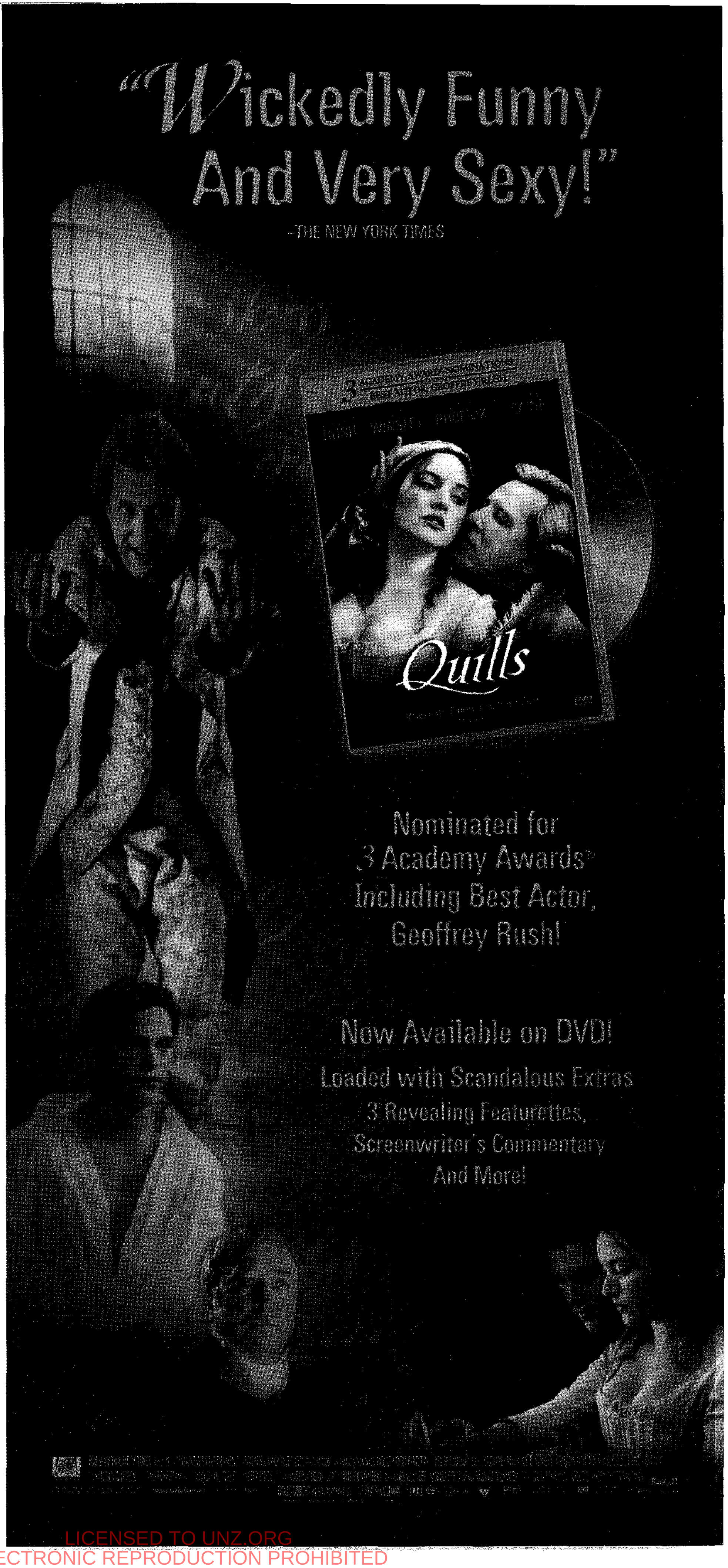
GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

IDA APPLEBROOG
Applebroog's 1975-77 "Galileo Works," a series of small, repetitive drawings that could almost be mistaken for pages from a particularly dry flip book, harasses its scientific hero with insinuations of sexual confusion and professional fraud. Then it moves, in larger and more operatic scale, through his heresy trials and his death, and follows up with—tiny again—translations of several letters from his daughter, everyday ephemera that become heartbreaking in the context of his greatness; she asks after her father's long-awaited visit to her convent and requests the return of a borrowed pot in which she had sent him preserved fruit. Through June 2. (Feldman, 31 Mercer St. 226-3232.)

JOEP VAN LIESHOUT
This artist is becoming famous for his Atelier van Lieshout (AVL), in Rotterdam—a cultish "free state" that sells ingenious, anarchy-tinged design services and seems hellbent for trouble. Van Lieshout swears by Machiavelli, de Sade, and William Morris, and he has an ominous thing for weapons. In this show, two homespun but plainly lethal mortars stand ready, and drawings for a no-frills machine gun are on view. Taken together, the show's exhibits suggest hectic communal days spent in martial preparation, dining at a lovely Shaker-like table, having sex with intricately motorized mannequins, using an elaborate composting toilet, and tumbling en masse into enormous bunk beds. The AVL gang may be up to no good, but they do it spectacularly well. Through May 25. (Tilton/Kustera, 47 Greene St. 941-1775.)

JEFFREY VALLANCE
Ever since he bought a frozen chicken, named her Blinky, and had her interred with full honors in a pet cemetery—that was two decades ago—Vallance has been solemnizing unions of the sacred and the insane. His method is sweet-tempered paranoia; for example, he exhaustively documented what he claimed were clown images in the Shroud of Turin and notified the Pope of his findings. Here he displays splendid life-size wax statues of the Virgin of Guadalupe, Dante Alighieri, and (clutching reels of tape) Richard Nixon. The highly involved reasons for the grouping are, when you learn them, just short of intelligible. Like the late comic Andy Kauffman, Vallance stirs tentative hilarity. Through June 16. (Lehmann Maupin, 39 Greene St. 965-0753.)

DAVID YELLEN AND HELEN GARBER
Yellen and Garber, a husband-and-wife team, calculate that they drove twenty thousand miles with Poison, Dokken, Slaughter, and Cinderella's recent "Power to the People" glam-metal tour. They photographed fans along the way, and when they got home, Garber did a series of paintings of their subjects—both bodies of work are called "American Groupie." The prints, which range from small crotch-grabbing candids to large portraits of a trinity of conventionally beautiful young women (girls you could slot into an Abercrombie & Fitch ad with no one the wiser), include plenty of the title characters: young junkies and strippers and matronly types in spandex. One may wonder why Garber bothered making paintings, but her large, defiantly retro, heavily glossed canvases, painted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— Entertainment Weekly

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— RollingStone.com

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ANNE SOFIE VON OTTER MEETS ELVIS COSTELLO

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in a brand of slightly awkward realism which borders on folk art, suit the subjects perfectly. Both shows through June 2. (Photographs at Visionaire, 11 Mercer St. 273-8959. Paintings at Bronwyn Keenan, 3 Crosby St. 431-5083.)

"DREAMS AND DISILLUSION: KAREL TEIGE AND THE CZECH AVANT-GARDE"
In the years between the establishment of a Czech nation in 1918 (the Dream) and the invasion of Prague by Nazi troops twenty-one years later (the Disillusion), graphic designer and theorist Teige and his circle strove to create an explicitly Czech avant-garde. This sprawling show—heavy on printed matter like periodicals and posters—tracks the development of the movement, which owes much to the Russian Constructivists. (At one point a poster extolling the virtues of the worker-athlete is installed on a giant black dot, as if to underscore its affinity with artists like Rodchenko). Through July 7. (Grey Art Gallery, 100 Washington Square E. 998-6780.)

Short List

BRAD KAHLHAMER
Deitch Projects, 76 Grand St. 343-7300. Through June 30.

HIRO YAMAGATA
Ace, 275 Hudson St. 255-5599. Through July 28.

AUCTIONS & ANTIQUES

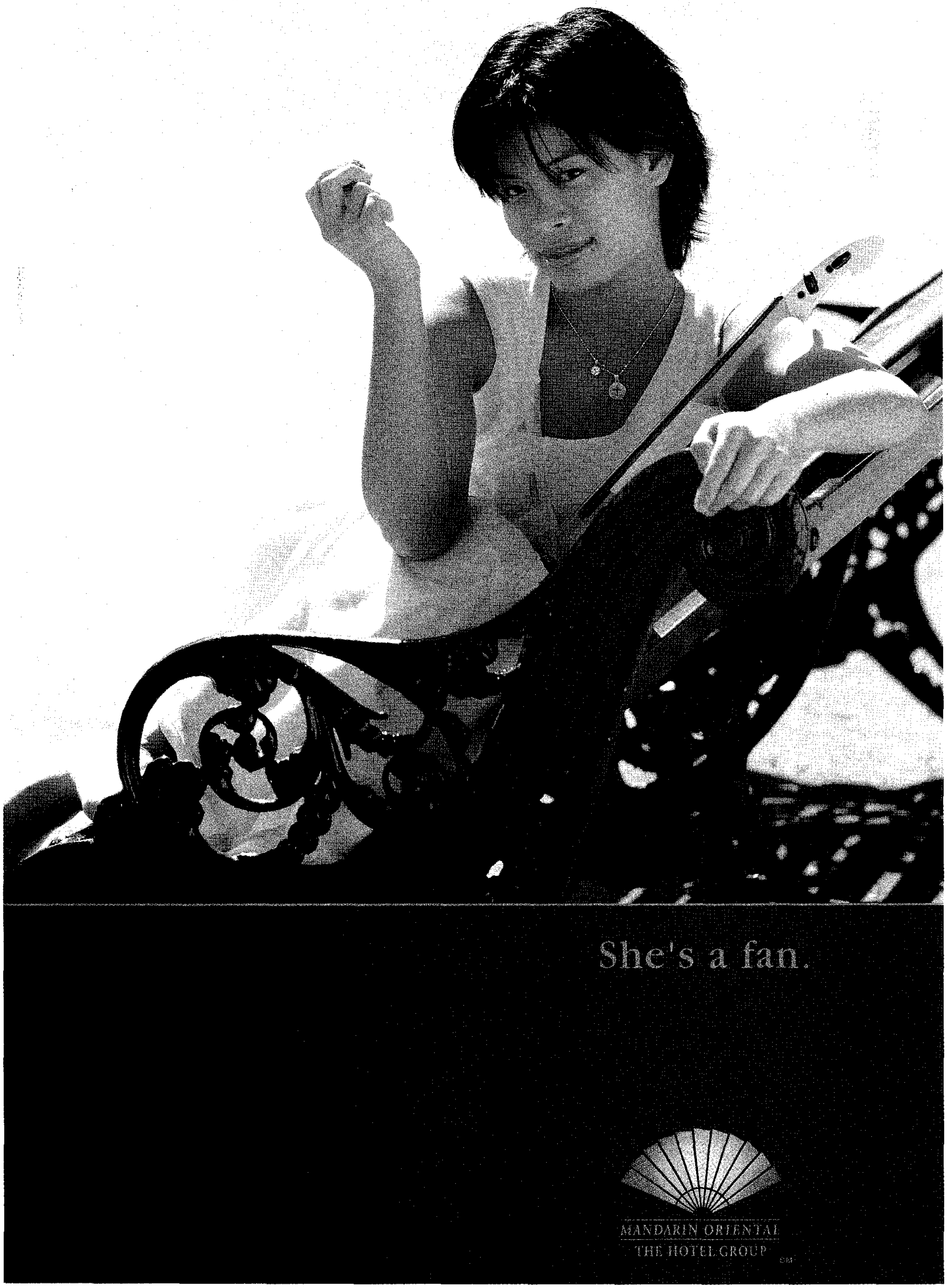
SOTHEBY'S
May 16 at 10:15 A.M. and 2: Part II of a sale of contemporary art. While the morning session is well stocked with work by some of the big guys—Albers, Warhol, Carl Andre, and the like—the afternoon session provides a refreshing change, full of striking paintings, photographs, and sculpture by an unusually large contingent of women, including Shirin Neshat ("Untitled," a powerful photograph of a wedge of black-clad Muslim women), Lisa Yuskavage, Rosemarie Trockel, and Karin Davie ("Lazy Susan" I and IV, two menacing swirls of red and black). Men also make a respectable showing in the afternoon, particularly Andreas Gursky, with his photograph "Krefeld," a richly expressive neo-Romantic landscape. ♦ May 19 at 10 A.M. and 2: Fine wine. ♦ May 19 at 10:15 A.M. and 2: Art work from Africa, Oceania, and the Americas. ♦ May 22 at 10:15 A.M. and 2: European furniture and works of art. A limewood figure of a female saint by Tilman Riemenschneider (ca. 1460-1531) is the highlight of the sale—this is the first time one of his works has appeared at auction in the United States. (York Ave. at 72nd St. 606-7000.)

CHRISTIE'S
May 16 at 7 and May 17 at 10 A.M.: Postwar art. ♦ May 17 at 7 and May 18 at 10 A.M.: Contemporary art. ♦ May 22 at 10 A.M. and 2: Printed books and manuscripts, including Americana. The original typed manuscript scroll of Jack Kerouac's novel "On the Road" is the highlight of the sale. (20 Rockefeller Plaza, at 49th St. 636-2000.)

PHILLIPS
May 22 at 2:30: American paintings, drawings, and sculpture, including John Singer Sargent's painting "A Spanish Woman" and Mary Cassatt's pastel "Mrs. Harris Whittemore and Baby Helen." (3 W. 57th St. 570-4830.)

DOYLE
May 16 at 10 A.M.: English and Continental furniture and decorations, along with a selection of Old Master drawings and paintings. ♦ May 22 at 1: American and European paintings and sculptures from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Eastman Johnson's painting "Feeding the Lamb" is a highlight of the sale, as are four canvases by Jean Dufy. (175 E. 87th St. 427-2730.)

SWANN
May 17 at 10:30 A.M.: American drawings and watercolors, including work by Thomas Hart Benton, Paul Cadmus, Federico Castellon, Rockwell Kent (six drawings made for a Time, Inc. marketing portfolio, ca. 1938), and Louise Nevelson. (104 E. 25th St. 254-4710.)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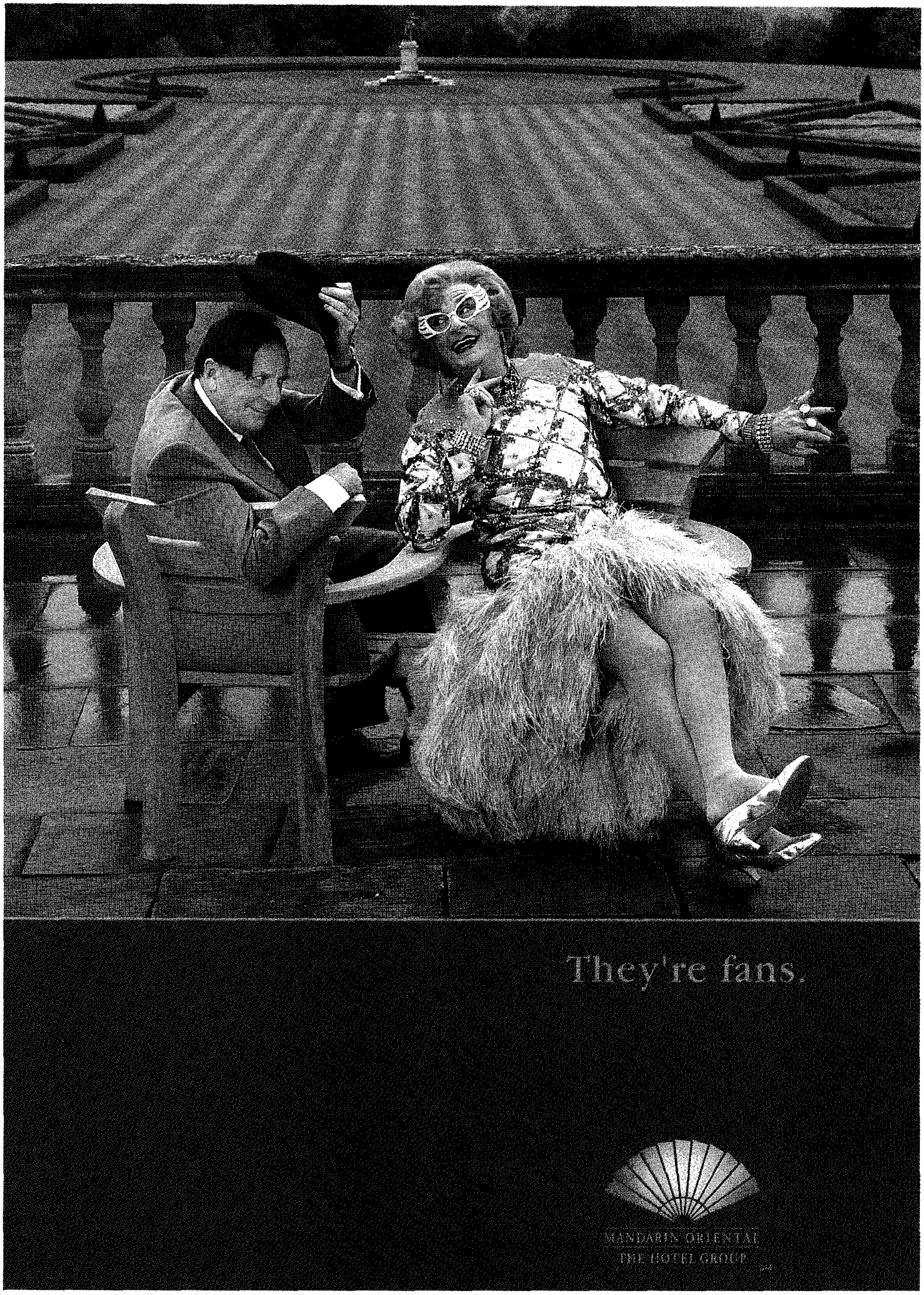
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NEW YORK INTERNATIONAL TRIBAL ANTIQUES SHOW
The show makes its third appearance at the 7th Regiment Armory, showcasing traditional fine arts and artifacts from around the world. (Park Ave. at 66th St. 310-455-2886. May 20-23.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

TRACEY BARAN
This New York photographer's third show includes a nude (it's the artist, with a bad case of poison ivy), some decomposing livestock (heaped matter-of-factly next to discarded slabs of concrete), and a fat guy moping in his bath. Beautiful, crisp color and an almost sultry Southern-gothic tone draw her disparate subjects together, so that the sweating cocktail glass on a windowsill works perfectly well opposite a closeup of a fresh, fur-fringed carcass. Through June 9. (Liebman Magnan, 552 W. 24th St. 255-3225.)

JAMES CASEBERE
Casebere pioneered interior photography of tabletop architectural models more than twenty-five years ago—shooting as if from inside, he enlarged his prints so that they appeared to document full-sized spaces. This time he floods empty sites with ankle-deep water. A few look like postapocalyptic Monticellos—where tour groups once shuffled through wide, arched doorways, now there is only water and ethereal light. The strongest image, "Gallery" (2001), is modelled on Sean Kelly's new exhibition space, where the work is being shown, and, in the muted surrealism of its delicate light and shadow, recalls Edward Hopper's "Rooms by the Sea." Through June 16. (528 W. 29th St. 239-1181.)

LEE FRIEDLANDER
The master of the American social landscape takes a stab at the baby picture. "Grand Children" offers the expected settings (a bathtub, a lap, a living room) and protagonists (tots who grow into preteens), but the photographs are still classic Friedlanders, small moments of reverie trapped in subversive compositions. One image seems as inspired by a maze of ceramic tiles as by the bathing baby who, by virtue of a well-placed mirror, appears at both edges of the picture. The related show "Serial Portraits," at Andrea Rosen, offers forty-year visual time lines of Friedlander's family and artistic peers, including Garry Winogrand, John Szarkowski, R. B. Kitaj, and the artist's wife, Maria. Both shows through May 19. ("Grand Children," Borden, 560 Broadway. 431-0166. "Serial Portraits." Rosen, 525 W. 24th St. 627-6000.)

LINDA GIRVIN
Most people know lenticular photography from wiggling those old 3-D postcards to make Santa or Elvis dance. Girvin appropriates this gimmicky medium for her decidedly anti-kitsch work; she collapses up to ten fleeting images into each shifty print, which changes with every minute movement of the viewer's head. She seems to be to striving to manipulate time—and the occasional glimmer of human flesh makes the viewing experience resemble flipping idly past the scrambled porn channels on cable TV. Through May 19. (DeWitt, 547 W. 27th St. 695-6845.)

DOUG HALL
Hall's large-format color photographs of Asia are almost always shot from some height; they take in acres of water or the crowns of their subjects' heads. Shots of Vietnamese wetlands and the breathtaking "Tokyo Bay" diptych (an industrial waterfront framed by the arc of a flyaway highway ramp) use this godlike perspective to fit in as much picturesque landscape as possible; other images use it to crowd more pedestrians, moped riders, rickshaw proprietors, and swimmers into the composition. Through June 2. (Feigen, 535 W. 20th St. 929-0500.)

INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY
Kiki Smith's "Telling Tales" parses fairy stories and childhood myths via photography, sculpture, and video. Hans Bellmer's oddly assembled dolls and a collection of Victorian daguerreotype portraits of male friends—some of whom look to modern eyes like couples—are also on show. All shows at the Center's Midtown space through June 10. ♦ A survey of Mary Ellen Mark's work will be the last exhibit to appear in the Uptown galleries, which close with the show on June 16. (Uptown: 1130 Fifth Ave., at 93rd St. Midtown: 1133 Sixth Ave., at 43rd St. 860-1777. Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, 10-5; Fridays, 10-8; Saturdays and Sundays, 10-6.)

Short List

BERND AND HILLA BECHER
Zwirner & Wirth, 32 E. 69th St. 517-8677.
Through May 25.

SEIICHI FURUYA
Scalo, 560 Broadway. 334-9393.
Through June 9.

WILLIAM KLEIN
Cowles, 537 W. 24th St. 925-3500.
Through May 26. ♦ Greenberg, 120 Wooster St. 334-0010. Through June 9.

ANNU PALAKUNNATHU MATTHEW / KETAKI SHETH / PAMELA SINGH
Sepia, 148 W. 28th St. 645-9444.
Through June 16.

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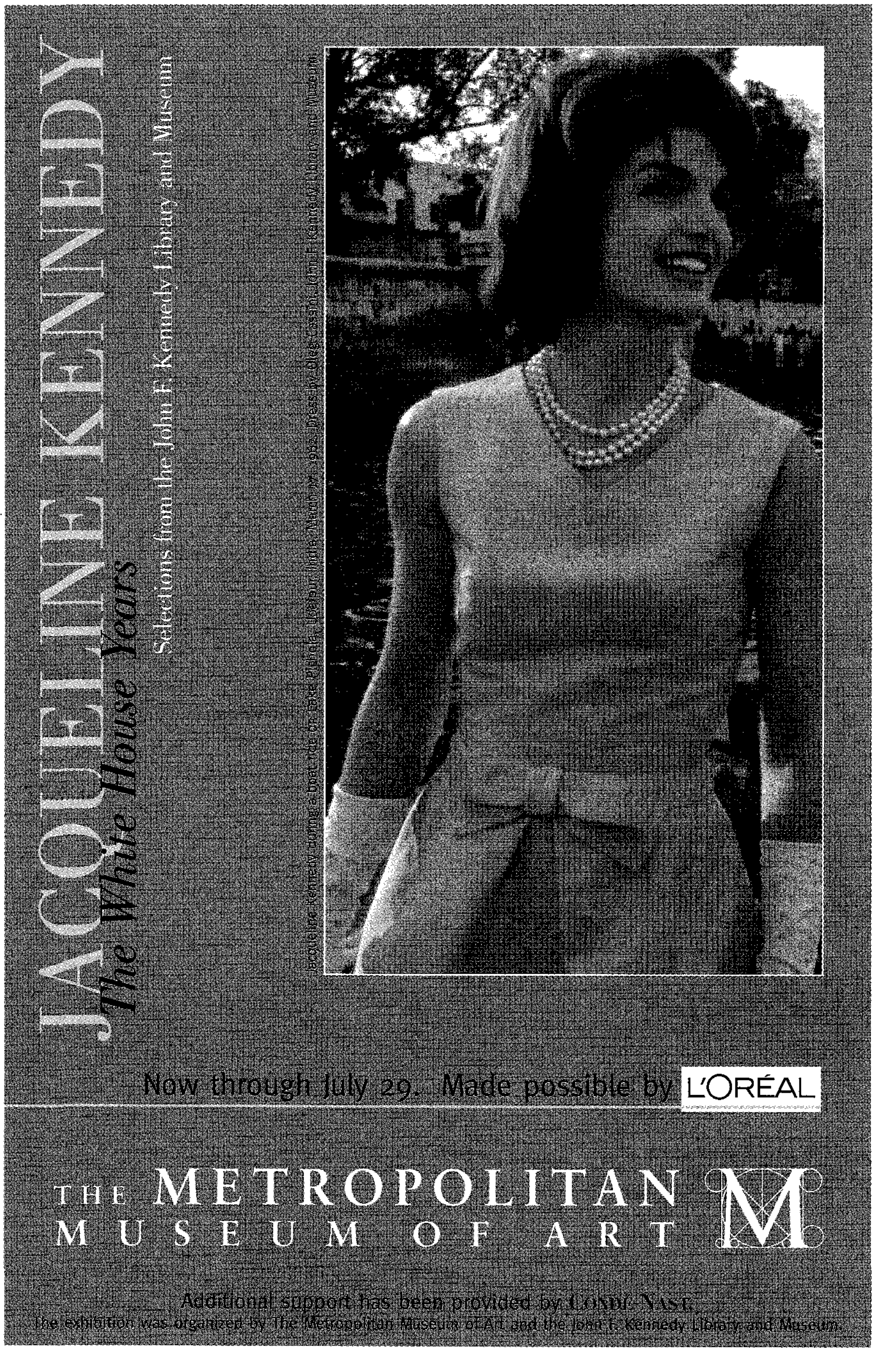
As part of its "Showcasing American Composers" series, the company presents full orchestral readings of excerpts from several new works. May 16 at 4: **"Hit and Run,"** with music and libretto by Michael Abels, and **"www.love,"** a modern romance, with music by Kevin March and a libretto by Kim Yaged; Ted Taylor conducts. ♦ May 17 at 4: **"The Cows of Apollo, or, the Invention of Music,"** by Christopher Theofanidis (with a libretto by William M. Hoffman), and **"All My Sons,"** based on the play by Arthur Miller, with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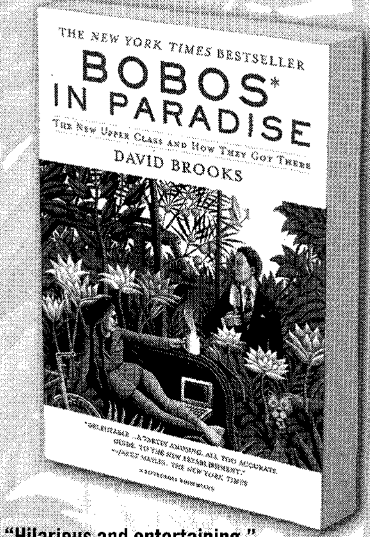
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VILLE ET VILLAGE

music and libretto by the late James Legg; Glen Cortese and Ted Taylor. (West Park Presbyterian Church, Amsterdam Ave. at 86th St. May 17 at 4. No tickets necessary.)

NEW YORK GILBERT & SULLIVAN PLAYERS
The company presents **"The Pirates of Penzance,"** conducted by Albert Bergeret. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. May 17-18 at 8 and May 19 at 3 and 8.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC
Christopher Rouse is arguably America's leading composer of concertos; his style may sometimes seem cloddish and blunt, but his pieces can have a genuinely disturbing impact. The Violin Concerto, now receiving its long-overdue New York première from Cho-Liang Lin (for whom it was composed), shows Rouse in his most elegant, subtle, and Romantic mode: it is a virtuoso vehicle touched with tragedy. David Zinman conducts the program, which also includes music by Rouse's favorite composer, Berlioz (three pieces from "The Damnation of Faust"), and Brahms's Symphony No. 2. (Avery Fisher Hall. 721-6500. May 17-18 at 8 and May 22 at 7:30.) ♦ **Note:** Two of the concerts will be preceded by a recital featuring Debussy's Sonata for Flute, Viola, and Harp, along with Rouse's "Compline," for chamber ensemble. The performers include principal harpist Nancy Allen and principal cellist Carter Brey. (Avery Fisher Hall. May 17 at 6:45 and May 22 at 6:15.)

AMERICAN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
Critics have not always been kind to Carl Orff: the composer of "Carmina Burana," the 1937 choral drama set to bawdy medieval texts which went on to become a colossal success as a concert oratorio, has been castigated for the propaganda potential of his orgiastic style and for his willingness to accept favors from the Nazi regime. But a later generation has come to see Orff, like Strauss, more as a bystander than as a collaborator, and his music's eclectic combination of folk tunes, Baroque and Greek dramaturgy, and simplified Stravinskyan rhythms continues to pack a considerable punch. The conductor Leon Botstein is doing his part by presenting "Catulli Carmina" and "Trionfo di Afrodite," the even more hedonistic successors to "Burana"; the soprano Lisa Saffer and the Bavarian Radio Chorus assist. (Avery Fisher Hall. 581-1365. May 16 at 8.)

EOS ORCHESTRA: "SONG(WRITER)S WITHOUT WORDS"
Composers who concentrate on writing songs or operas sometimes find themselves adrift when attempting music devoid of text: Puccini and Wolf, for example, could only match the abundant glories of their vocal music in their exquisite miniatures for string quartet. But the conductor Jonathan Sheffer, who has never shied away from risky programming, is bridging the gap. For this concert, he commissioned "Cut Time," a set of variations for piano and orchestra, from Jake Heggie (well known for his songs and for his opera "Dead Man Walking"), and orchestrated (with the composer's permission) Stephen Sondheim's Concertino for Two Pianos, which the Broadway giant wrote during his undergraduate days at Williams College. The rest of the program—Wagner's "Siegfried Idyll" and the string-orchestra version of Verdi's eloquent String Quartet—will set the bar very high indeed. The guest pianist is Jeremy Denk. (Ethical Culture Society Concert Hall, 2 W. 64th St. 691-6415. May 17 at 8.)

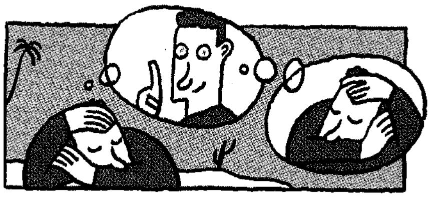
VOICES OF ASCENSION
Dennis Keene conducts music from the Russian Orthodox tradition (by Tchaikovsky, Gretchaninoff, and others), along with the Fauré Requiem. (Church of the Ascension, Fifth Ave. at 10th St. 254-8553. May 17 at 8.)

NEW YORK CHORAL ARTISTS
Music by Mozart (the Requiem) and Vaughan Williams (the cantata "Dona Nobis Pacem"), conducted by John Daly Goodwin. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. May 18 at 8.)

BOOK CURRENTS

To Sleep, Perchance to Dream

Paul McCartney's "Yesterday," the periodic table, and the first ironclad battleship all reportedly had their origins in dreams. In **THE COMMITTEE OF SLEEP** (Crown), Deirdre Barrett collects stories of nocturnal inspiration, including E. B. White's description of how Stuart Little came to him as he slept, complete "with his hat, his cane, and his brisk manner . . . I was deeply touched, and felt that I was not free to change him into a grasshopper or a wallaby." Although some artists maintain this sort of respect toward their dreams, others go to desperate lengths to manipulate them. Salvador Dali advised soft pressure on the eyeballs (applied by one's valet), as well as a bedtime snack of sea urchins prepared "à la Catalane," in a chocolate-based sauce.

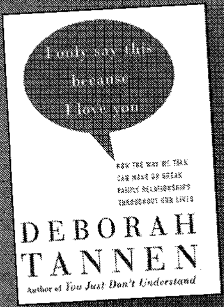


In **THE DIMENSIONS OF DREAMS** (Fromm), Ole Vedfelt aims to synthesize conflicting schools of dream theory. He notes that Rosalind Cartwright, a scientist who researches dreams in the laboratory, has used contemporary knowledge of REM sleep to advance a hypothesis similar to one articulated by Jung. Although the intense stimuli of daytime experience keeps us from noticing it, she argues, we are dreaming at low levels all the time.

Jack Kerouac intended his **BOOK OF DREAMS** (City Lights), spontaneously recorded between 1952 and 1960 and newly published in its entirety, as an extension of his novels and poems. In one dream, he plans a trip east, "as if there could be East or West in that waving old compass of the sack." Kerouac spends many nights on the road, travelling to Mexico City, India, and Russia. Only when the landscapes become less exotic do the dreams start to terrify him: "What am I doing in this sinister North Carolina as a clerk getting up at 6:00 . . . a nightmare only life could have devised."

—*Nell Freudenberger*

EVER MEULEN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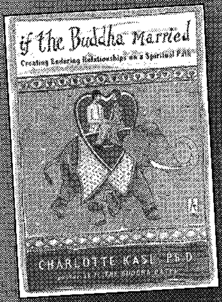
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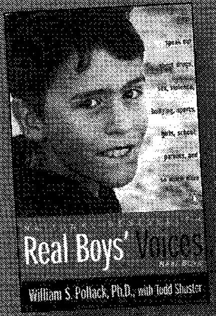
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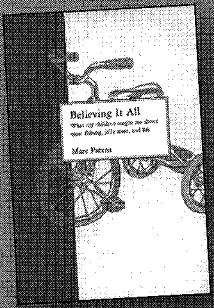
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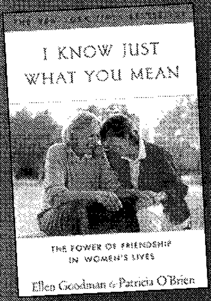
I KNOW JUST WHAT YOU MEAN
THE POWER OF FRIENDSHIP IN WOMEN'S LIVES
Ellen Goodman & Patricia O'Brien

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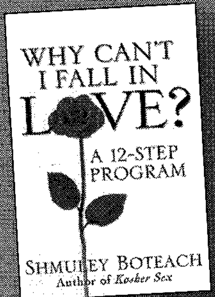
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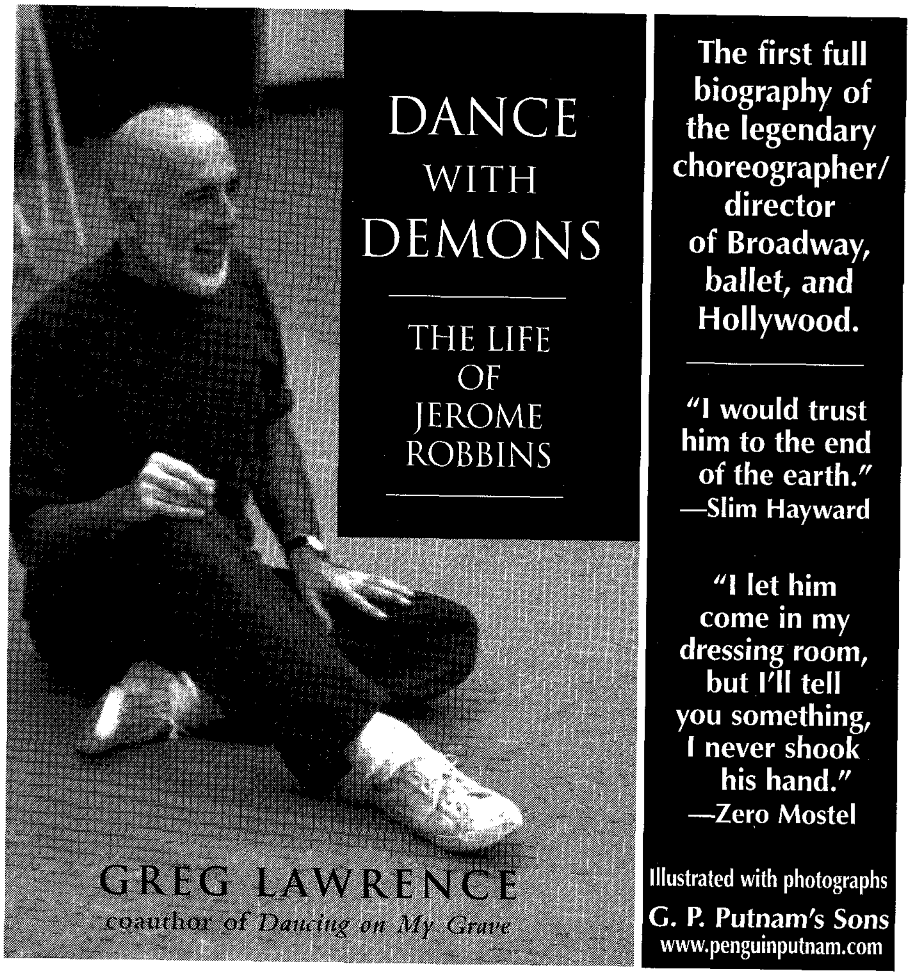
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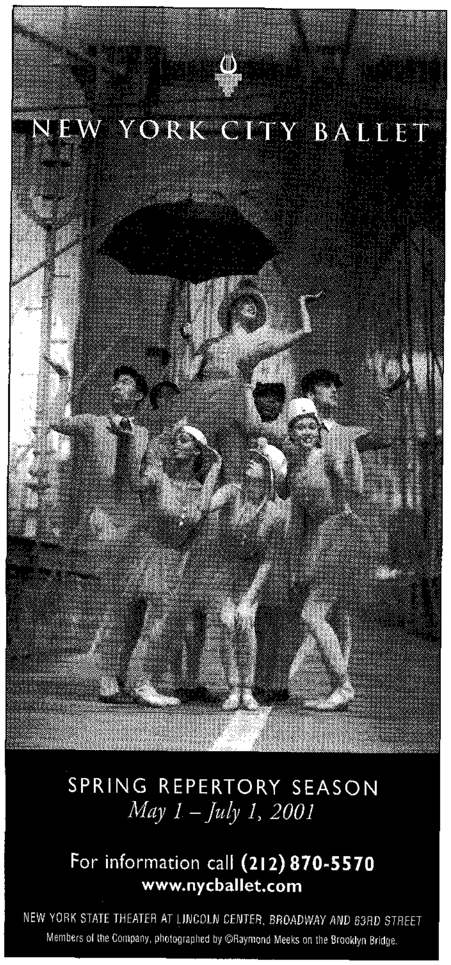
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BROOKLYN PHILHARMONIC
Robert Spano, the orchestra's music director, brings the Philharmonic's season to a close with Mahler's Symphony No. 3, assisted by the Brooklyn Youth Chorus, members of the New York Virtuoso Singers, and the mezzo-soprano Michelle de Young. (BAM Opera House, 30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn. 718-636-4100. May 18-19 at 8.)

CERDDORION
The chamber chorus (whose name means "musicians" in Welsh) presents music about plants and animals by Arcadelt, Britten ("Rejoice in the Lamb"), Fine, John Tavener, and others. (Church of St. Luke in the Fields, 487 Hudson St. 774-4105. May 19 at 8.)

NEW YORK YOUTH SYMPHONY
The pianist John Browning (performing Beethoven's "Emperor" Concerto) is the special guest for the final concert of the orchestra's season; the program also includes the première of a work by the young composer Stefan Freund ("No Apologies") and Mahler's Symphony No. 1. Mischa Santora conducts. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. May 20 at 2.)

COLLEGIATE CHORALE
Hei-Kyung Hong, John Daniecki, and John Hancock are the soloists in a concert of Orff ("Carmina Burana") and Poulenc (the "Gloria"), conducted by Robert Bass; the Riverside Choral Society and the Brooklyn Youth Chorus assist. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. May 22 at 8.)

RECITALS

LYRIC CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY
Jean-Pierre Rampal, the Sun King of flutists, died last year at seventy-eight; the Society, in its final concert of the season, pays tribute to him with music by Schubert, Jolivet, and others, performed by the flutist Valerie Chermiset, the cellist Maria Kitsopoulos, and the pianist Richard Bishop. (Kosciuszko Foundation, 15 E. 65th St. 279-4200. May 16 at 8.)

CONCERTANTE CHAMBER PLAYERS
Two American classics—Barber's "Dover Beach" (with the baritone Ted Christopher) and John Adams's "Shaker Loops"—anchor the group's last concert of the season, which closes with Dvořák's Viola Quintet. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 501-3330. May 16 at 8.)

THOMAS BUCKNER
Buckner, a baritone, occupies the same niche in the downtown scene that the tenor Paul Sperry enjoys with more traditional composers: he's a tireless advocate for new and neglected vocal music. Buckner's Merkin Hall recital spotlights music with (mostly) electronic accompaniments, by Alvin Lucier, "Blue" Gene Tyranny, Mari Kimura, and others. (129 W. 67th St. 501-3330. May 17 at 8.)

BARGEMUSIC
Two programs coördinated by the violist Toby Hoffman. May 17 and May 19 at 7:30: Music by Busoni, Schumann (the grandiloquent Piano Quintet), and Dvořák (the Terzetto for Two Violins and Viola, one of his loveliest and most gentle works). ♦ May 18 at 7:30 and May 20 at 4: Korngold's Piano Quintet (with the pianist William Wolfram), along with two pieces by Schumann. (Fulton Ferry Landing. 718-624-2083.)

CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY OF LINCOLN CENTER
The Society closes its season with a rambunctious pair of concerts showcasing lighter music of the early twentieth century (including Milhaud's "La Création du Monde" and Weill's "Kleine Dreigroschenmusik") and two works by the contemporary American composer Michael Daugherty ("Sinatra Shag" and "Dead Elvis," a concerto for a bassoonist dressed in King-ly garb). Reinbert de Leeuw conducts. (Alice Tully Hall. 875-5788. May 18 at 8 and May 20 at 5.)

REBECCA PECHEFSKY
The harpsichordist presents music by Bach (the second "English Suite") and d'Agincourt in the Morris-Jumel Mansion's Colonial-era drawing room. (65 Jumel Terrace, between 160th and 162nd Sts. 923-8008. May 19 at 2.)

URSULA OPPENS AND THE BRENTANO STRING QUARTET
The pianist collaborates with one of classical music's leading young ensembles in piano quintets by Elliott Carter and Charles Wuorinen. (Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. 279-4200. May 19 at 7:30.)

COMPOSERS CLOSE UP: MICHAEL HERSCH
John Schaefer (of WNYC's "New Sounds" program) hosts the première of Hersch's Octet for Strings. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 501-3330. May 19 at 9. A reception and conversation with the composer follow the concert.)

SUNDAYS ON THE ISLAND: THE ORFEO DUO
Vita and Ishmael Wallace, sister and brother, are the violinist and pianist of this young duo; they offer a concert of music by Dvořák, Beethoven (the "Spring" Sonata), and Eric Quin at the snug Le Refuge Inn. (620 City Island Ave., the Bronx. 718-885-2478. May 20 at 12:30.)

OMEGA ENSEMBLE
The clarinettist Jean Kopperud and the violinist Soovin Kim are featured in a concert of chamber works by Beethoven, Brahms (the Violin Sonata in G Major), Schumann, and Saint-Saëns. (Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, Fifth Ave. at 55th St. May 20 at 3. No tickets necessary.)

"MARTHA ARGERICH MEETS IVRY GITLIS"
Sonatas by Beethoven (the "Kreutzer") and by Franck are the foundation of this recital, which the pianist and the veteran Israeli violinist offer at Carnegie Hall. (247-7800. May 20 at 8.)

S.E.M. ENSEMBLE
Petr Kotik, the composer and director of this avant-garde group, has been a close collaborator with Vaclav Havel and with John Cage; his concert at the Paula Cooper gallery features his own "Letters to Olga" (settings of letters Havel sent to his wife from prison) and Cage's open-form piece "Ryoanji." (534 W. 21st St. 718-488-7659. May 22 at 8.)

TAKA KIGAWA
An unusually challenging all-French program from the young pianist, who performs Pierre Boulez's Third Sonata and "Incises" along with standard works by Debussy (Book I of the "Preludes") and Ravel ("La Valse"). (Weiler Concert Hall, Greenwich House, 46 Barrow St. 242-4770. May 22 at 8.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

"DRALION"
The latest arrival from Montreal's Cirque du Soleil—currently playing in Liberty State Park, across the Hudson River, in New Jersey—continues the avant-garde circus conglomerate's fascination with the intersection of technology and acrobatics. Such rock-concert-worthy tricks as clouds of dried ice and loud, throbbing, vaguely New Age music supplement the expected circus fare: clowns, acrobats, a juggler (the exceptionally talented Victor Kee), and trapeze artists. The only things absent are live animals (Cirque eschews them in favor of the music and lights) and a degree of professional polish (the Chinese acrobats looked a little shaky and the hoop divers missed the mark a few times during a recent performance). And if you're coming from New York City, the evening includes a short and spectacular ferry ride from the World Financial Center, in Battery Park City, which comes close to upstaging "Dralion" 's polycultural spectacle. (Through June 10. For more information, call 800-678-5440.)

READINGS
May 16 at 8: By Ed Friedman and Lorenzo Thomas, from their poetry. (St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. Tickets at the door.) ♦ May 17 at 7: By David Rakoff, from his collection of humorous essays, "Fraud." (Three Lives & Company, 154 W. 10th St. No tickets necessary.) ♦ May 20 at 7: By Fred Leebron, from his short stories, and by Steven Rinehart, from his fiction. (K.G.B., 85 E. 4th St. No tickets necessary.)

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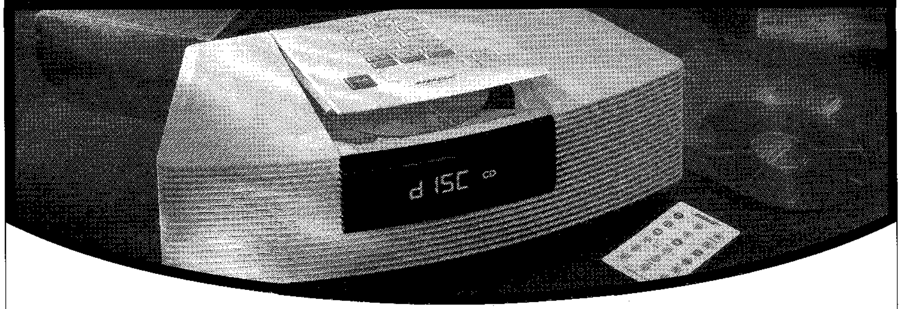

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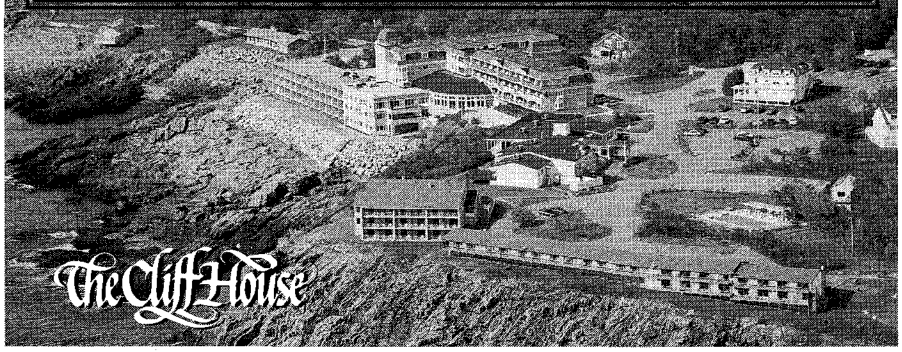

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MOVIES OPENING

ANGEL EYES
In a thriller directed by Luis Mandoki, a Chicago police officer (Jennifer Lopez) becomes involved with a man seemingly without a past (Jim Caviezel). Opening May 18.

FAST FOOD FAST WOMEN
Patrons of a Manhattan coffee shop search for dates in a romantic comedy with Louise Lasser and Anna Thomson. Opening May 18.

MOULIN ROUGE
Baz Luhrmann directed this musical set in the bohemian Paris underworld of the nineteenth century. Ewan McGregor plays a young poet who becomes enamored of a notorious night-club singer (Nicole Kidman). Opening May 18.

PETITS FRÈRES
A drama written and directed by Jacques Doillon about youths in Parisian housing projects, featuring a cast of nonprofessionals. In French. Opening May 18.

SHREK
Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. Opening May 16.

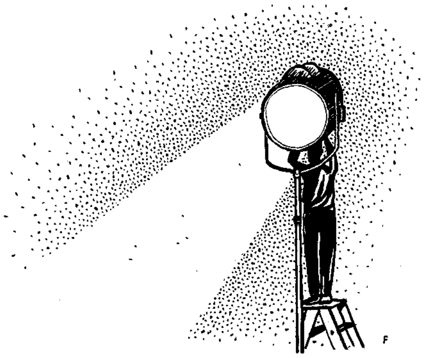
STRANGE FITS OF PASSION
A comedy from Australia about the love travails of a bookstore employee (Michela Noonan) and her gay best friend. Opening May 18.

FILM NOTES

AMORES PERROS
This three-part tale, the début directorial effort of Alejandro González Iñárritu, gives you a pretty good idea of what life is like in Mexico City and an enduring wish never to drive its streets at rush hour. The first section chronicles the near-incestuous affair between Octavio (Gael García Bernal) and his sister-in-law Susana (Vanessa Bauche). The second, which sags with weary symbolism, is about a model who loses a leg. The third and strongest tells of an ex-terrorist and tramp (Emilio Echevarría). The connective tissue between these folks is a car crash, and each of them also either owns or trains dogs. Iñárritu's style may be heated and hectic, but he doesn't bully you into judging these frazzled figures, and, in Echevarría, he has found a figure of great and grimy nobility. In Spanish.—*Anthony Lane* (Reviewed in our issue of 4/2/01.) (Empire 25, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and Union Square.)

BLOW
The story of George Jung—a Massachusetts man who sold the Medellín cartel's cocaine to mainstream America in the seventies—would seem to offer a perfect star vehicle for Johnny Depp, but the unconvincing narrative doesn't allow him to shape a performance. The director, Ted Demme, and the screenwriters, David McKenna and Nick Cassavetes, tell the story of George's rise as a series of semi-comic riffs on his unwittingness—how casually he operated, how oblivious he was to risk and treachery on all sides. The scenes are flimsily staged—thin and underdone. Now and then Demme throws in the towel and resorts to a rapid montage of shots meant to convey the giddy drug life, but this isn't directing; it's more like flinging a loosely pasted scrapbook onto the floor and asking the audience to sort it out.—*David Denby* (4/9/01) (Battery Park 16, Empire 25, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, Sutton 1 and 2, and Village Theatre VII.)

BREAKING AWAY
The airily goofy hero (Dennis Christopher) is a local boy in Bloomington, Indiana, who develops an obsession with bicycle racing, modelling himself after the victorious Italians he reads about in sports magazines. Along with three other aimless nineteen-year-olds, he competes against the big shots of Indiana University in a bicycle race, and they fight for the dignity of all "cutters" (as the townies are called, because the main industry is quarrying). Directed by an Englishman, Peter Yates, this 1979 picture is a modest marvel of wit, construction, and empathy. He shows how Old World grace can flower in unlikely spots.—*Michael Sragow* (Anthology Film Archives; May 17-19.)



BRIDGET JONES'S DIARY
Helen Fielding's creation has finally arrived onscreen; in place of her wiry, worried tone we now find an almost confident pleasure in mishaps and manhunting. The director, Sharon Maguire, has shaped the fretful original into a basic romantic comedy, leaving an aching Bridget (Renée Zellweger) with a choice of nice Mr. Darcy (Colin Firth) or dastardly Daniel Cleaver (Hugh Grant). These three leads are much better than the movie they front; some of the secondary characters are dangerously thin, although Jim Broadbent is as crumpled and reliable as ever in the role of our heroine's dad. Bridget mania, meanwhile, shows no signs of abating, but one hopes that this film might herald the end of the affair; after all, self-pity has its limitations as the engine of drama, and the idea that a young woman might be not just unhappy but somehow incomplete without a man would have struck even Jane Austen as laughably passé.—*A.L.* (4/16/01) (Battery Park 16, Cinema II, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, Olympia I and II, Orpheum VII, and Village Theatre VII.)

THE CENTER OF THE WORLD
Explicit, eyeglass-fogging sexual games from the director Wayne Wang. A nerdy, rich Silicon Valley computer engineer, Richard (Peter Sarsgaard), pays a beautiful freckle-faced stripper, Florence (Molly Parker), to accompany him to Las Vegas for a three-day weekend. She agrees but with many conditions (no kissing on the lips, no penetration, strictly limited business hours). Richard is paying, but he wants feeling and emotion; Florence wants nothing but control. The movie, shot with a hand-held digital camera, has a dreamy surface and the aura of a reverie, but there's also a bit of suspense floating in the erotic cloud: Will Richard get Florence to respond to him? A friend of Florence's named Jerri (Carla Gugino), who is her opposite in every way—dark, fleshy, needy—threatens to take the movie to a dangerous place, but she storms off, leaving the two inarticulate principals to mop up.—*D.D.* (4/23 & 30/01) (Angelika Film Center, Chelsea Cinemas, Eastside Playhouse, Empire 25, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, and 62nd & Broadway.)

CHOPPER
The tale of a brute and a braggart, all the more daunting for being drawn from life; Mark Brandon Read (Eric Bana), lovingly known as Chopper, was one of the most outlandishly violent—and certainly most famous—prisoners in Australia's jails. Andrew Dominik's movie tracks him from the late nineteen-seventies to the early nineties, watching him make and remake enemies while cleaving ominously to old friends. The film steps up to its neck in blood, yet it's hardly your standard exploitation flick. Chopper may be exploiting the prison system, and the media have fun exploiting his legend, but there is also a strain of comic independence in the man, and the picture ends up as a thoroughly Australian, if discordant, hymn to the peculiar virtues of mateship.—*A.L.* (4/16/01) (Chelsea Cinemas, Empire 25, and Village East Cinemas.)

THE CIRCLE
Anonymous women on the streets of Teheran crouch alongside cars to avoid police, dart down alleys, and flee from dangerous places with black chadors held over their heads, as if flying under dark wings. At first, we may be puzzled by the frenetic rushing about, but after a while, we realize that this is exactly the point. These women have either spent time in prison or are heading straight there, and they are looking for a place to hide in a society in which single women have no more than provisional legitimacy as citizens. The director, Jafar Panahi, offers echoes of the Italian neorealist cinema in the general forlornness and pained humanism of his approach, but he's created aesthetic strategies all his own. Despite a longueur here and there, the cumulative power of "The Circle" is extraordinary. In Farsi.—*D.D.* (4/23 & 30/01) (Cinema Village and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

DRIVEN
Bring earplugs. Renny Harlin and Sylvester Stallone, the team who gave us the vertical thrills of "Cliffhanger," try to go horizontal with a car-racing movie. It's not a bad popcorn flick as long as Sly and the gang stay in their cars, but when they emerge it gets ugly.—*Michael Agger* (Battery Park 16, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, New York Twin, Orpheum VII, Union Square, and Ziegfeld.)

FREDDY GOT FINGERED
The method of freak-out comedian Tom Green, here directing his first movie, is pretty simple: he takes the things that people regard as sacred—pregnant women, defenseless children, the father-son relationship—and savages them like a cable-comedy-show Buñuel. Green gives us burlesque cruelties, put-on sex, ketchupy blood showers, and lots of American cheese in revolting slices. After a while, Green's outrages turn out to be shocking not because they're vicious and profane but because they're so badly staged. The film has been described in some quarters as a work of art, but it doesn't have any aesthetic qualities that one could point to: it's madly egotistical, rhythmless, badly lit, terribly edited.—*D.D.* (Battery Park 16 and Empire 25.)

THE GOLDEN BOWL
Henry James made easy—no small task, given the complications of the plot. Prince Amerigo (Jeremy Northam) marries Maggie Verver (Kate Beckinsale), whose father, Adam Verver (Nick Nolte), then marries Maggie's friend Charlotte Stant (Uma Thurman). No one, needless to say, has a clue what anyone else is up to, let alone what happened before the marriage craze set in. In the book, such innocence seems like one of the infinite velleities of its atmosphere; onscreen, you have half a mind to slap the characters awake. This is a Merchant-Ivory production, so it looks as luscious as ever, though the actors display an unaccustomed shudder of neurosis; the honorable exception is Nick Nolte, who gives a growling depth to his depiction of the self-made man. Not much happens, although it is cunningly camouflaged as excess; why have a boring party, the film suggests, when you can make it a costume party and have people wear suits of armor? James would have fainted with surprise, although the sight of Uma Thurman in a sheer camisole might have forced him to revise his entire theory of fiction.—*A.L.* (5/7/01) (BAM Rose Cinemas and Paris.)

IN THE MOOD FOR LOVE
The latest film from the talented young Hong Kong writer-director Wong Kar Wai is all about sensual anticipation. In the early sixties, in a community of Shanghai refugees living in Hong Kong, Mrs. Chan (Maggie Cheung) and Mr. Chow (Tony Leung) are next-door neighbors in a friendly apartment building. The perfectly dressed and coiffed couple meet, talk, and realize that their frequently travelling spouses are off having an affair with each other. What to do? So skillfully does the director bring us to a state of breathless expectation that when he refuses to deliver the goods he almost seems to have invented a new form of perversion. In Cantonese and French.—*D.D.* (2/5/01) (Village East Cinemas.)

THE KILLING
Stanley Kubrick made two pictures before this one, but they were juvenilia; this shrewdly worked-out 1956 suspense film, which he created at the age of twenty-seven, is the real beginning of his career. Centering on a racetrack robbery, it has fast, incisive cutting; a nervous, edgy style; and furtive little

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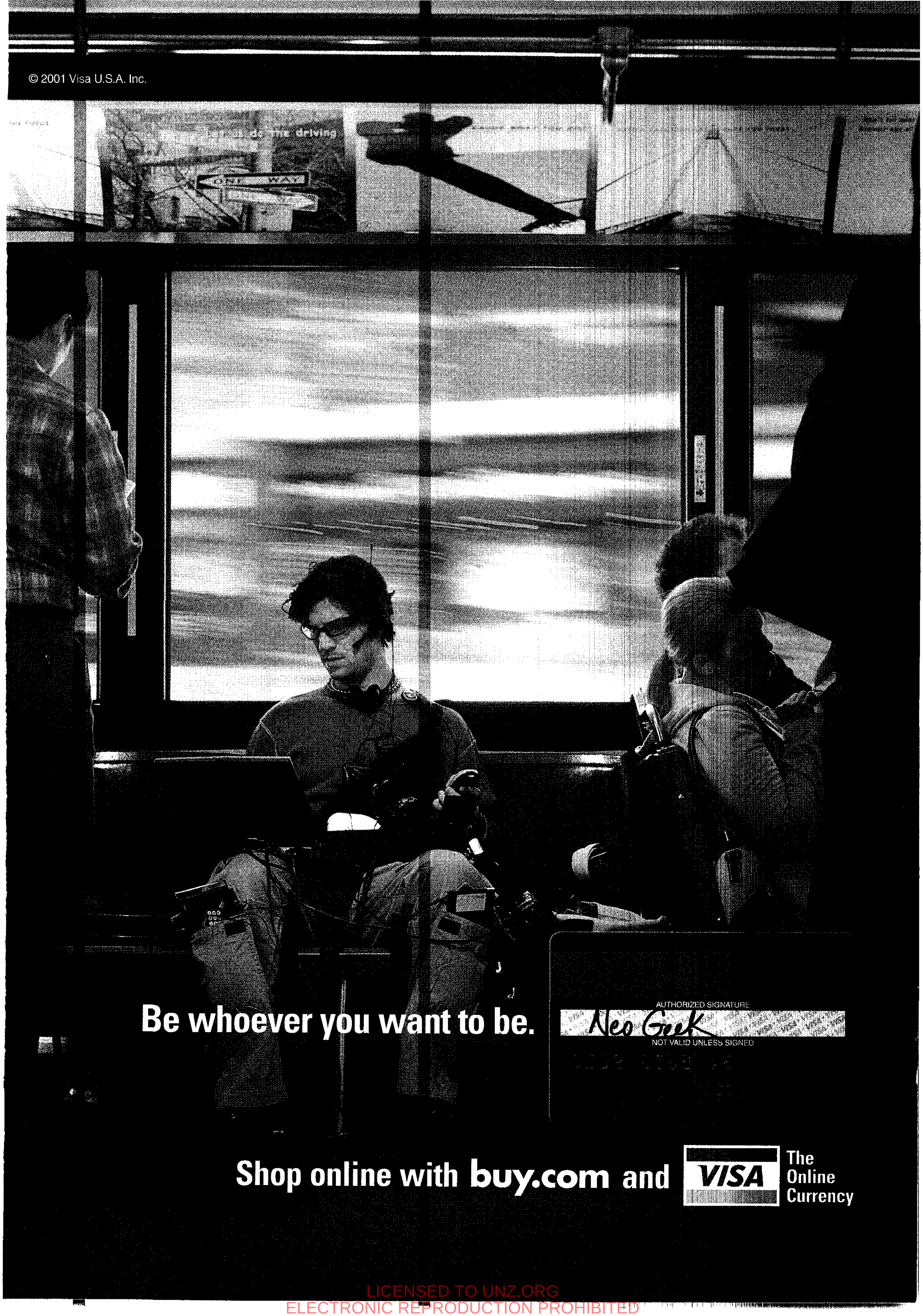
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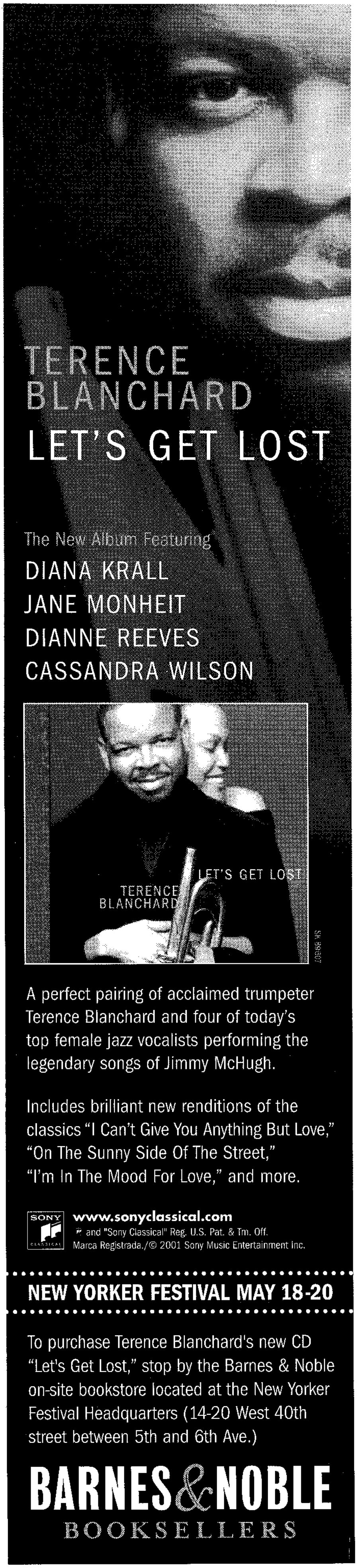

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touches of characterization. The cast includes many familiar second-string actors, but they go through enough unfamiliar movements to keep one in an agreeable state of anxious expectation.—*Pauline Kael* (The Screening Room; May 22.)

KISS OF DEATH

A tense, terrifying New York crime melodrama, with an unusually authentic seamy atmosphere; the director, Henry Hathaway, shot the entire 1947 film on location. Victor Mature gives a subdued, convincing performance as a hoodlum convict who agrees to work with the police as an informer. Richard Widmark, in his film début, created a sensation; he's a giggling, sadistic gunman with homicidal mania in his voice, and when he grins his white teeth are more alarming than fangs.—*P.K.* (Walter Reade Theatre; May 19.)

THE LEGEND OF SURAM FORTRESS

Willfully obscure, loony, and beautiful. In this Russian folktale, the walls of the title fortification keep falling down, leaving the region of Georgia open to attack. The director, Sergei Paradjanov, doesn't so much tell the story as illustrate it. This 1985 film is full of deadpan outlandishness and turns of medieval vaudeville. In Georgian.—*M.S.* (Cinema Classics; May 16-17.)

THE LUZHIN DEFENCE

After the stream-of-consciousness rigors of Virginia Woolf's "Mrs. Dalloway," the director Marleen Gorris tackles the endgames and head games of Vladimir Nabokov's chess novel. John Turturro plays the titular Russian prodigy, and he gives his emotionally catatonic character a slouchy, innocent physical charm. As the countess who loves Luzhin, Emily Watson is all eyes and smiles. Together, the two actors combine for a few clever gambits, but it's mostly a muted affair.—*M.A.* (BAM Rose Cinemas, Beekman, Empire 25, and Union Square.)

MEMENTO

Guy Pearce ("L.A. Confidential") plays Leonard, a former insurance investigator who has mislaid his short-term memory; leave the room and come back ten minutes later, and he won't remember you. To help his case, and to solve the apparent murder of his wife, Leonard tattoos himself with memoranda and drives around the lowlier districts of L.A. County. At the same time, he has a couple of acquaintances (Carrie-Anne Moss and Joe Pantoliano) who seem eager both to support Leonard and to use his condition for their own unscrupulous ends. There is a fine, despairing comedy to these events—not just in our fidgety hero but in the constant thwarting of our need to know. The young British writer and director Christopher Nolan, who has every intention of putting us through the mill, doubles his fun by running the whole story backward. Damn him.—*A.L.* (3/19/01) (Angelika Film Center, Astor Plaza, Battery Park 16, East 86th Street Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, and Olympia I and II.)

NIGHT AND THE CITY

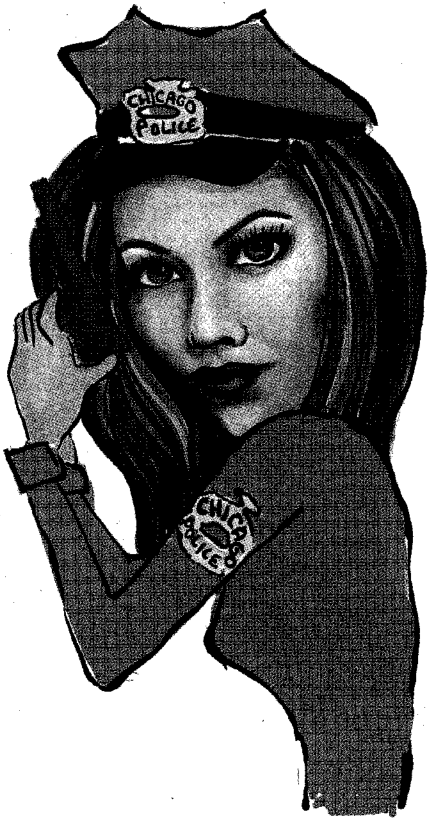
Several years before he made "Rififi," Jules Dassin directed this less flamboyant 1950 thriller, which is much less well known but, in some ways, better. Dassin's shocking specialty—a kind of stifled violence that one fears will explode—finds the right milieu in the Gerald Kersh novel, a complex view of the underside of London entertainment. An Anglo-American cast is headed by Richard Widmark, who has possibly his best role as Harry Fabian, "the artist without an art," a tout with a creative passion for fantastic, shady schemes.—*P.K.* (Walter Reade Theatre; May 18-19.)

PEE-WEE'S BIG ADVENTURE

This slapstick 1985 novelty starring Pee-wee Herman—the Peter Pan of the shopping-mall era—is somewhere between a parody of kitsch and a celebration of it, and it has the bouncing-along inventiveness of a good cartoon. It's set in a candy-colored period of its own—a fifties-eighties Twilight Zone. Pee-wee's bike—the love of his life—is stolen, and his search to recover it takes him from L.A. to Texas, to the Alamo and back. Hitching rides, he encounters a series of American-movie archetypes (an escaped convict, truckers, hoboes, rodeo riders, a mean, wild motorcycle gang) and the then-twenty-six-year-old director Tim Burton shows his flair for the silly-surreal.—*P.K.* (Anthology Film Archives; May 18-20.)

PERFORMANCE

It plays better now as a piece of scabrous swinging-England memorabilia than it did in 1970 as a rock melodrama determined to blow your mind. Co-directed by Nicolas Roeg and the screenwriter Donald Cammell, the film stars James Fox as Chas Devlin, a sadistic East End gangster, and the spiky, ever-androgynous Mick Jagger as a reclusive ex-rocker named Turner. Chas, on the run from his ex-boss, winds up in the basement of Turner's mansion. The house philosophy is "Nothing is true—everything is permitted." The dictum also applies to Roeg and Cammell's hallucinogenic filmmaking. As Chas and Turner drill into each other's heads, drugs blur individuality, and pleasure-seeking blends into nihilism. This film may be a bad trip—but it's a trip.—*M.S.* (Film Forum; May 16-17.)



Jennifer Lopez in "Angel Eyes."

ROBERT MELEE

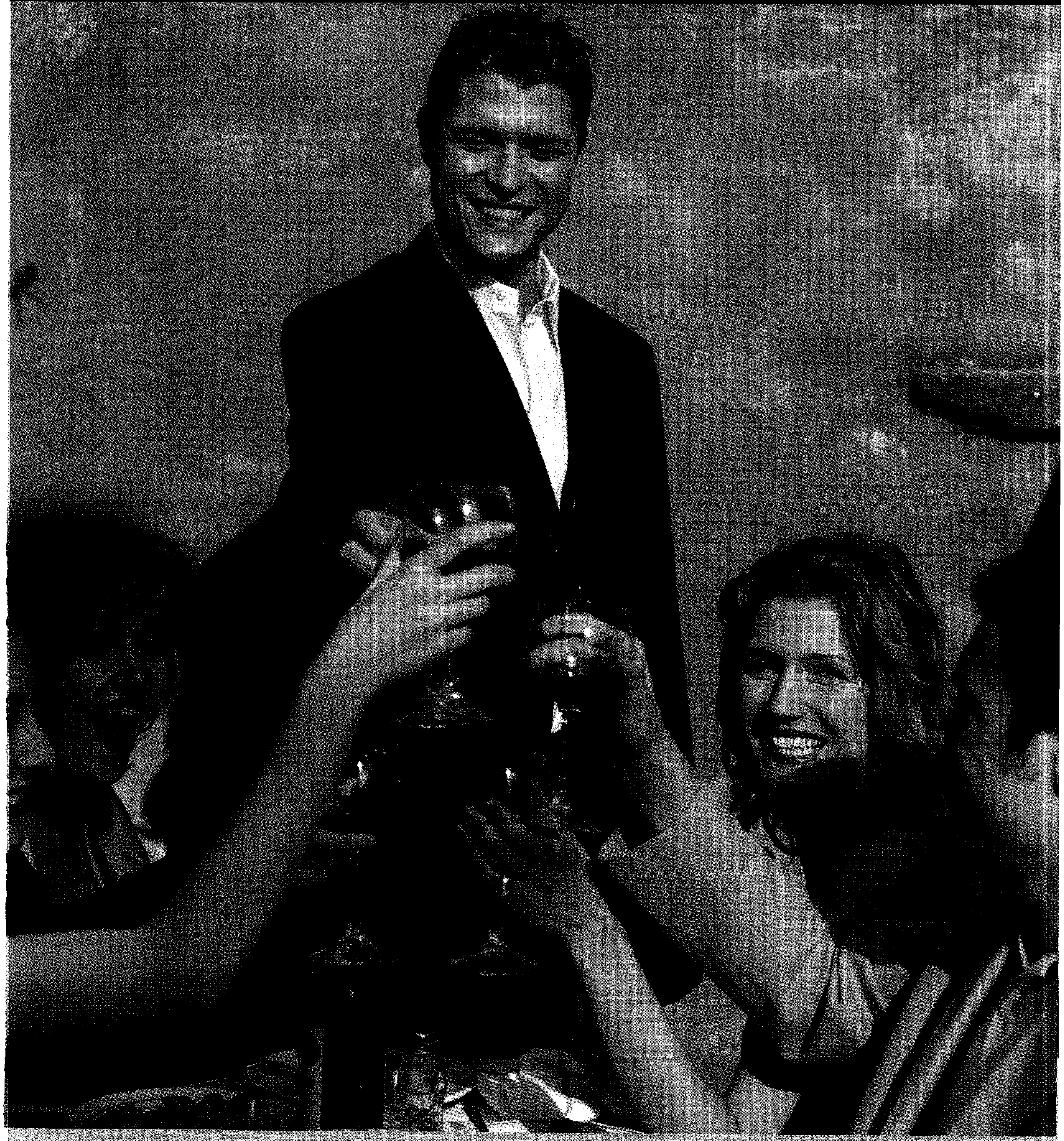
POLLOCK

A dogged march through the life and work of Jackson Pollock, starting in the early nineteen-forties, when Lee Krasner (Marcia Gay Harden) first approached him in Greenwich Village, and ending gloomily in a car wreck in 1956. The film was directed by Ed Harris, who also plays the artist. His best scenes are not the boozy rants but the quiet times with a cigarette and a brush—or, latterly, a dripping stick. Pollock's drinking was an interruption of his art, not a spur to it, and the film can do little to connect the two; we are left with a sombre study of discontent.—*A.L.* (3/5/01) (64th and 2nd and Village East Cinemas.)

STARTUP.COM

A fascinating cinéma-vérité documentary account of how two very young men—Kaleil Isaza Tuzman, a Goldman, Sachs employee, and Tom Herman, a techie—started an Internet company in New York, burned through sixty million dollars, lost their way, and got swallowed up by another company, all within eighteen months. The filmmakers Jehane Noujaim and Chris Hegedus nosed their way into meetings and arguments and drove around with the two men as they aired their desires and fears. Tuzman is burly and handsome,

fire our therapist.



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with an easy, ready way about him; Herman, who keeps growing and shaving a dark beard, is high-minded and tends to be diffident about the fate of the enterprise itself. The two men emerge from the fiasco without any money but with their friendship intact. The movie's account of their dealings with one another is painfully funny and very intimate, perhaps too much so: it would have been useful to have more detail about how the business actually worked and why it went wrong.—*D.D.* (5/14/01) (Film Forum.)

STRANGERS IN GOOD COMPANY
The director Cynthia Scott gives the audience the illusion—and the pleasures—of unstructured time in this documentary-flavored portrait of seven senior women stranded on a bus in the gorgeous, unpopulated Mont Tremblant region of Quebec. Scott uses nonprofessional performers and draws on their real lives to flesh out this enticingly calm survival drama. Her attitude toward old age is restorative: the women's stamina and senses may have weakened, but experience hasn't smoothed the edges off their characters.—*M.S.* (Museum of Modern Art; May 18 and 20.)

THE TAILOR OF PANAMA
A messy adaptation of the John le Carré novel, directed by John Boorman. As Andy Osnard, Pierce Brosnan plays an anti-Bond: the spy who loves nobody except himself. He is sent to Panama, where he recruits a local tailor, Harry Pendel (Geoffrey Rush)—who, like so many le Carré creations, has constructed the story of himself to escape from a shameful, secret past. Boorman wants to turn the novel's rueful satire into something sharp and sweaty, but the tone veers all over the place, and the plot feels like reckless fantasy.—*A.L.* (4/2/01) (Battery Park 16, Chelsea West, East 86th Street Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, and Union Square.)

TIME AND TIDE
The peaceful title is just a feint. In his thirty-eighth movie, the Hong Kong director Tsui Hark serves up a healthy measure of hardboiled alienation and gyroscopic firefights. There's also a dizzying plot involving Brazilian mercenaries, the Triad, and pregnant women, but the deft escapes and the how-did-they-do-that shots provide all the gravity the film needs. You can't look away. Pop stars Wu Bai and Nicholas Tse play the lead roles, and contribute to the synth-heavy soundtrack. In Cantonese and Mandarin.—*M.A.* (Village East Cinemas.)

UNDER THE SAND
Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. (Chelsea West, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and Quad Cinema.)

WITH A FRIEND LIKE HARRY. . .
A smart new horror story, at once thrilling and upsetting, from the director Dominik Moll. Michel (Laurent Lucas), a typically fretful father on vacation with his wife and children, meets an old schoolmate named Harry (Sergi López), who promptly starts changing Michel's life for the better. This entails buying him a new car and then getting to work on his ornery parents, his tired wife, and his frustrated ambitions as a writer. You can't really fault Harry's logic, and that's what makes him so daunting; his analysis of Michel's messy existence would do for just about anyone. It's his homicidal methods that somehow feel de trop, although Michel can no more be rid of him than Othello could slip from the clutches of Iago. All this is told with a tight, sweaty concentration. Anyone thinking of getting married and starting a family should probably stay clear of Moll's movie. As for driving around Europe, forget it.—*A.L.* (5/7/01) (Angelika Film Center, BAM Rose Cinemas, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

ALSO PLAYING

ABOUT ADAM
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THE KING IS ALIVE
Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, and Quad Cinema.

A KNIGHT'S TALE
42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, and Village Theatre VII.

THE MUMMY RETURNS
Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, First & 62nd Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Metro Cinema 1 and 2, Orpheum VII, Union Square, and Waverly.

ONE NIGHT AT MC COOL'S
Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, Coronet Cinemas, Empire 25, Lincoln Square, and Orpheum VII.

SPY KIDS
Battery Park 16, East 86th Street Cinemas, Empire 25, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, and Union Square.

TOWN & COUNTRY (5/14/01)
Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, East 86th Street Cinemas, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, and Lincoln Square.

THE TRUMPET OF THE SWAN
84th Street Sixplex, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, 64th and 2nd, and Union Square.

THEATRE ADDRESSES

Unless noted, call 777-FILM for show times.

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St.
Astor Plaza, 44th St. at Broadway.
BAM Rose Cinemas, 30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn.
Battery Park 16, West St. at Vesey St. (945-3418).
Beekman, Second Ave. at 66th St.
Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd St.
Chelsea West, 333 W. 23rd St.
Cinema I, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema II, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema 3rd Avenue, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th St. (924-3363).
Coronet Cinemas, Third Ave. at 59th St.
East 85th Street, First Ave. at 85th St.
East 86th Street Cinemas, Third Ave. at 86th St.
84th Street Sixplex, Broadway at 84th St.
Empire 25, on 42nd St. near Eighth Ave. (398-3939).
59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th St.
Film Forum, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110).
First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd St.
42nd Street E Walk, 42nd St. near Eighth Ave.
Kips Bay Theatre, Second Ave. at 32nd St.
Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, Broadway at 63rd St.
Lincoln Square, Broadway at 68th St.
Metro Cinema 1 and 2, Broadway at 99th St.
Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th St.
New York Twin, Second Ave. at 67th St.
19th Street East 6, Broadway at 19th St.
Olympia I and II, Broadway at 107th St.
Orpheum VII, Third Ave. at 86th St.
Paris, 4 W. 58th St. (688-3800).
Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th St.
Pioneer, 155 E. 3rd St. (254-3300).
Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th St.
The Screening Room, 54 Varick St. (334-2100).
72nd Street East, Third Ave. at 71st St.
64th and 2nd, Second Ave. at 64th St.
62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd St.
State, Broadway at 45th St.
Sutton 1 and 2, Third Ave. at 57th St.
Union Square, Broadway at 13th St.
Village East Cinemas, Second Ave. at 12th St.
Village Theatre VII, Third Ave. at 11th St.
Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center (875-5600).
Waverly 1 and 2, Sixth Ave. at 3rd St.
Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th St.

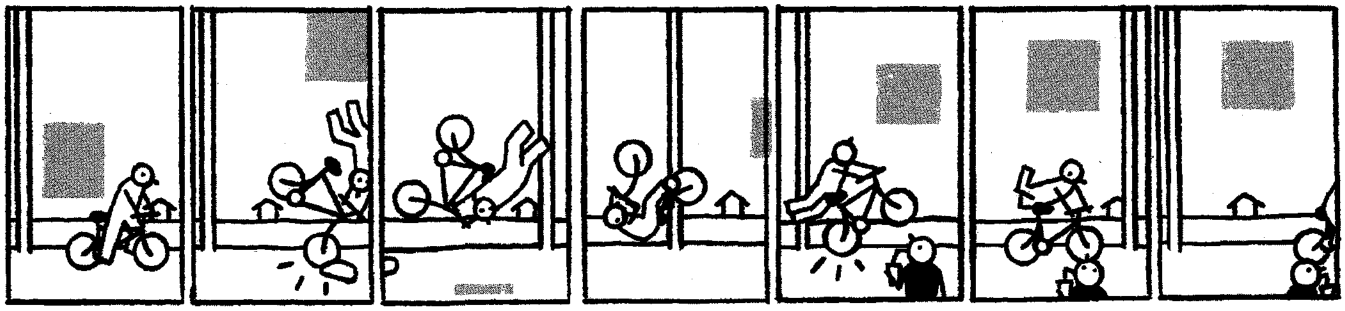
REVIVALS, CLASSICS, ETC.

Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE
35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—"The Responsive Eye: A Brian De Palma Retrospective." May 19 at 2: "Obsession" (1976). ♦ May 19 at 4: "Body Double" (1984). ♦ May 20 at 2: "Phantom of the Paradise" (1974). ♦ May 20 at 4: "Dressed to Kill" (1980). ♦ Repertory night. May 19 at 6:30: "Chinatown" (1974, Roman Polanski).

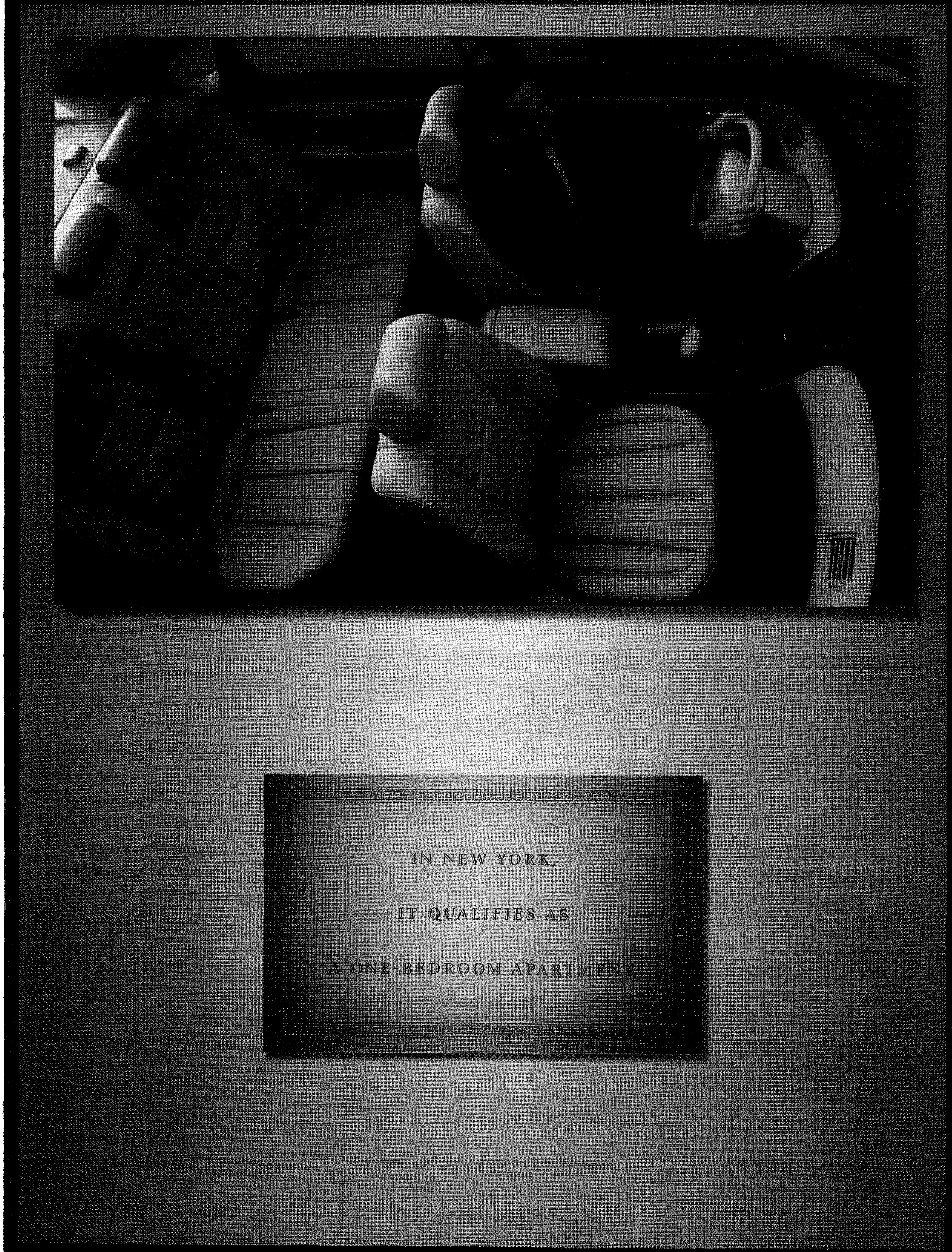
ANTHOLOGY FILM ARCHIVES
32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5110)—May 16-20: "The Bicycle Film Festival." May 16 at 8: "Miracle Boy and Nyquist" (2001, Steve Olpin) and "We Are Traffic" (2001, Ted White). ♦ May 17 at 8 and May 19 at 9: "2 Seconds" (1998, Manon Briand; in French). ♦ May 17 at 10, May 18 at 9:30, and May 19 at 4:30: "Breaking Away" (†). ♦ May 18 at 7 and May 20 at 7: "A Sunday in Hell" (1976, Jorgen Leth; in Danish). ♦ May 18 at 11:45, May 19 at 11:15, and May 20 at 3: "Pee-Wee's Big Adventure" (†). ♦ May 19 at 7 and May 20 at 5 and 9:30: "The Bicycle Thief" (1948, Vittorio De Sica; in Italian.)

BAM ROSE CINEMAS
30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (777-3456)—May 16 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "Full Moon in Paris"



At Anthology Film Archives, "The Bicycle Film Festival," a selection of movies that celebrate two-wheeled transportation.

LAURENT CILLUFFO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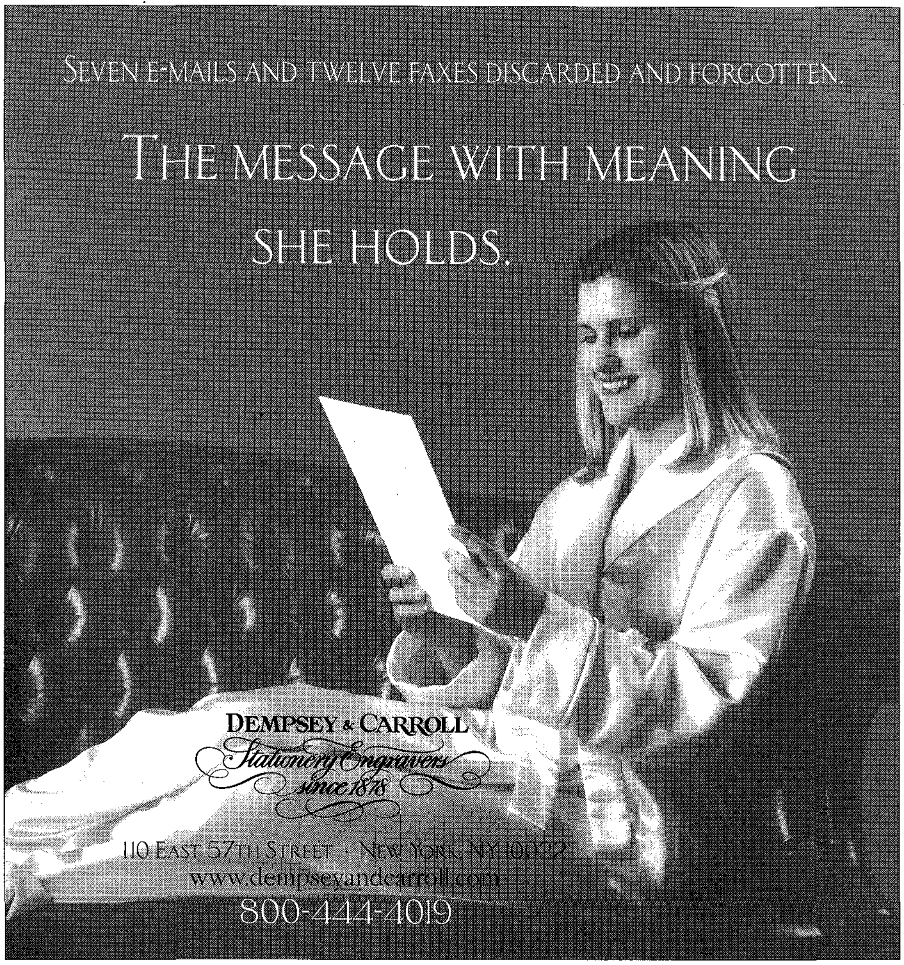

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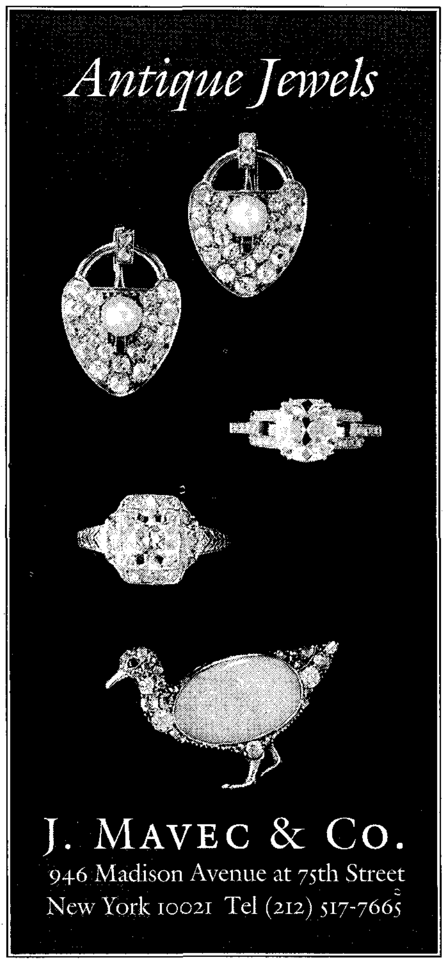

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(1984, Eric Rohmer; in French). ♦ May 17 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "A Good Marriage" (1982, Rohmer; in French). ♦ May 18 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "Boyfriends and Girlfriends" (1997, Rohmer; in French). ♦ May 19 at 2, 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "Pauline at the Beach" (1983, Rohmer; in French). ♦ May 20 at 2, 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "Summer" (1986, Rohmer; in French). ♦ May 21 at 4:30, 7, and 9:30: "The Professor" (1972, Valerio Zurlini; in French).

CINEMA CLASSICS
332 E. 11th St. (971-1015)—May 16-17 at 8 and 9:50: "The Legend of Suram Fortress" (†). ♦ May 18 at 8 and 11 and May 19-20 at 5, 8, and 11: "Solaris" (1972; Andrei Tarkovksy; in Russian). ♦ May 21-22 at 7:40 and 10: "Come and See" (1985, Elem Klimov; in Russian).

FILM FORUM
W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110)—May 16-17 at 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, and 9:50: "Performance" (†). ♦ May 18-22 at 1, 3:45, 6:40, and 9:25: "Juliet of the Spirits" (1965, Federico Fellini; in Italian).

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (360-4321)—"Conversations Between Shadows and Light: Italian Cinematography." May 18 at 7 and May 19 at 3: "Salvatore Giuliano" (1961, Francesco Rosi; in Italian). ♦ May 19 at 7: "8½" (1963, Federico Fellini; in Italian).

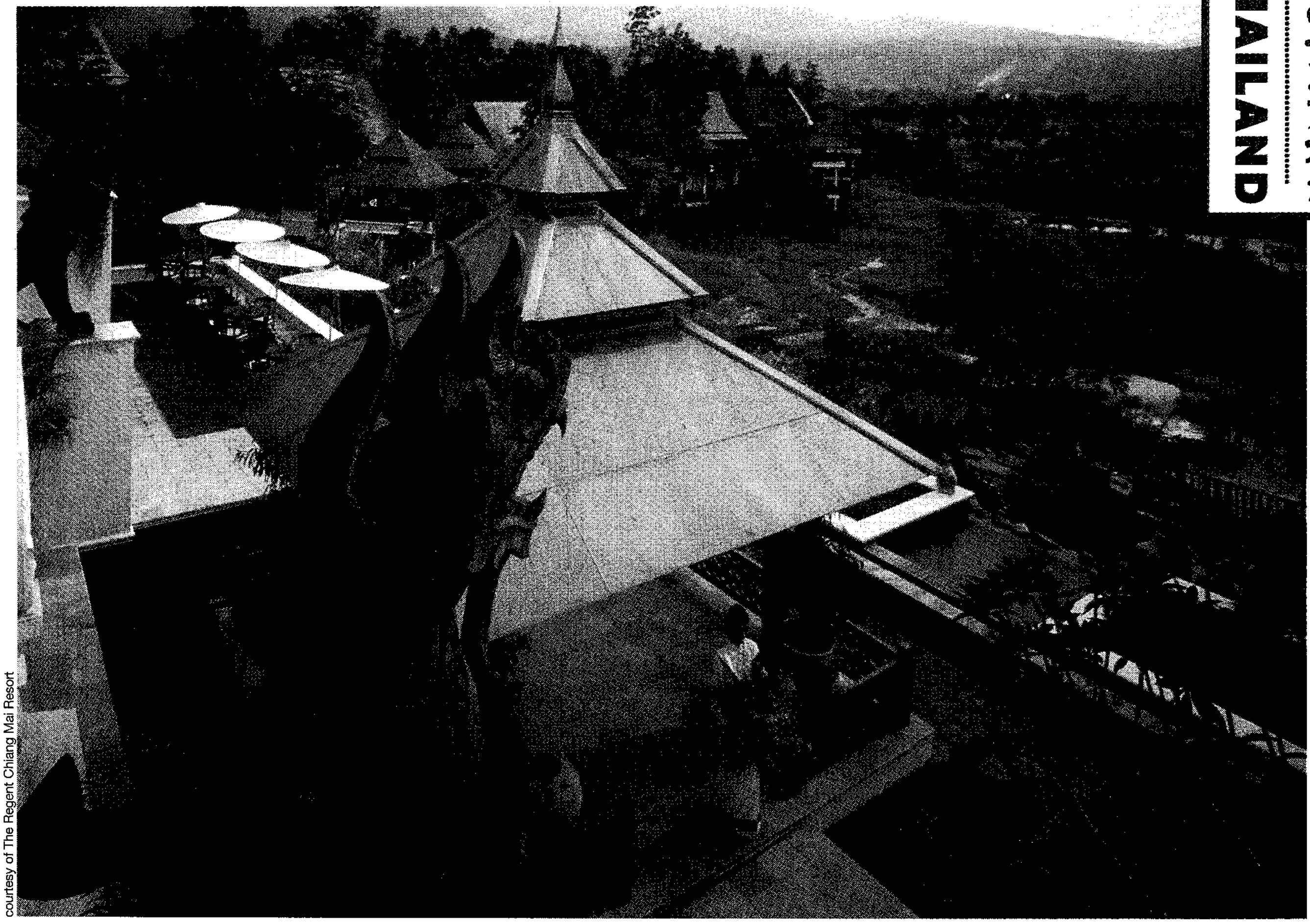
MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—Through June 19: "First Run Features: A Retrospective, 1979-2001." May 17 at 2:30: "The Architecture of Doom" (1991, Peter Cohen; in German). ♦ May 17 at 6: "Hamsun" (1996, Jan Troell; in Norwegian, Swedish, and Danish). ♦ May 18 at 2:30 and May 19 at 5:30: "Two Worlds of Angelita" (1983, Jane Morrison; in Spanish and English). ♦ May 18 at 6 and May 20 at 1: "Strangers in Good Company" (1990, Cynthia Scott). ♦ May 18 at 8: "Virgin Machine" (1988, Monika Treut; in German and English). ♦ May 19 at 1 and May 20 at 5:30: "Hester Street" (1975, Joan Micklin Silver). ♦ May 19 at 3:15: "Parting Glances" (1986, Bill Sherwood). ♦ May 20 at 3:15 and May 21 at 6: "Sunday's Children" (1992, Daniel Bergman; in Swedish). ♦ May 21 at 2:30 and May 22 at 6: "The Ox" (1991, Sven Nykvist; in Swedish). ♦ May 22 at 2:30: "Light Keeps Me Company" (2000, Carl-Gustav Nykvist; in Swedish).

MUSEUM OF TELEVISION & RADIO
25 W. 52nd St. (621-6800)—Through May 20: The 2001 Television Documentary Film Festival. May 16 at 6:30: "Chuck Jones: Extremes and In-Betweens" (2000, Margaret Selby). ♦ May 17 at 6:30: "Hitler's Holocaust" (2001, Maurice Philip Remy). ♦ May 18 at 6:30: "New York: A Documentary Film" (2001, Ric Burns).

THE SCREENING ROOM
54 Varick St. (334-2100)—Through May 22: A Stanley Kubrick retrospective. May 16 at 3:15, 4:40, 6:15, 8, and 10: "Killer's Kiss" (1955). ♦ May 17 at 4:30, 6:45, and 9:20: "Dr. Strangelove" (1964). ♦ May 18 at 4, 6:20, and 9:15: "Full Metal Jacket" (1987). ♦ May 19 at 3, 6:15, 9:15, and 12:15: "The Shining" (1980). ♦ May 20-21 at 4:15 and 8: "Spartacus" (1960). ♦ May 22 at 5: "The Killing" (†).

SYMPHONY SPACE
2537 Broadway, at 95th St. (864-5400)—"Cinema Italian Style." All films are in Italian. May 22 at 7: "Otello" (1986, Franco Zeffirelli). ♦ May 22 at 9:15: "Fellini's Casanova" (1976, Federico Fellini).

WALTER READE THEATRE
Lincoln Center (875-5600)—Through May 31: "On the Edge with Richard Widmark," a retrospective of the actor's films. May 18 at 2 and 6:15 and May 20 at 5:15 and 9: "Pickup on South Street" (1953, Samuel Fuller). ♦ May 18 at 3:45 and 8:30 and May 19 at 3:30: "Night and the City" (†). ♦ May 19 at 1:30 and 5:45: "Kiss of Death" (†). ♦ May 19 at 7:45: "When the Legends Die" (1972, Stuart Miller). ♦ May 20 at 7, May 21 at 3:15, and May 22 at 6: "Garden of Evil" (1954, Henry Hathaway). ♦ May 21 at 1 and May 22 at 3:45 and 8: "Yellow Sky" (1948, William Wellman). ♦ May 22 at 2: "Don't Bother to Knock" (1952, Roy Baker).



courtesy of The Regent Chiang Mai Resort

THE ART OF INDULGENCE

Modeled after traditional Lanna villages in the Mae Rim Valley, The Regent Chiang Mai Resort proffers spa treatments using natural recipes and ancient therapies.

HEALING SANCTUARIES

BY NELL NELSON

I came to Thailand to escape the endless stream of work-related decision-making. Yet here I was, caught in my familiar pattern of multitasking, weighing the pros and cons of various options: Should I take a yoga class in the Thai pavilion at sunrise, or a power walk along the beach followed by a mint foot wrap? Would I be finished in time for the breakfast buffet of pineapple, papaya, rambutans and mango, yogurt, fruit-combo muffins, and freshly squeezed fruit juices?

What should I do next? An hour in the flotation tank followed by a twenty-five minute honey and sesame scrub? Or, should I skip the scrub and catch the water aerobics class?

If the afternoon was sunny, I could lie by the pool for a couple of hours, confident in the knowledge that I had preëmptively booked a sixty-minute sunburn-soother session. (Aloe vera would be applied to my entire body, especially the sunburnt areas, dramatically lowering my body-surface temperature while moisturizing and encouraging new cell growth.)

Then, if I was not tired of all the heat, I could indulge in an herbal steam before sitting down to a tasty, slimming supper of low-calorie, no-salt cuisine (with a glass of wine just to be naughty). Such were my dilemmas on my first day at the spa.

Soothing treatments for nurturing and revitalizing the body are not new to Thailand, but the last seven years have seen a proliferation of luxury spas here. Some, like Chiva Som in Hua Hin, are dedicated solely to spa treatments while others are attached to elite international hotels such as The Oriental in Bangkok and The Regent in Chiang Mai.

Thailand is currently a haven for visitors who want to relax, find solace, and restore their mental and physical well-being. The Thais are experts simply because they have been doing it for so long. Traditional Thai massage is proven physical therapy and its origins date back to ancient India. Many of the luxury spa treatments offered in Thailand are derivatives of treatments originally provided by the temple monks.

Healing saunas are still practiced. A poultice made from herbs is placed in boiling water and the resulting sauna steam becomes pungent with the intoxicating aroma of healing herbs.

THE SPOILERS

The Regent Chiang Mai Resort & Spa
502 Moo 1, Mae Rim-Samoeng Old Road
Mae Rim, Chiang Mai, Thailand
Tel: (+66) 53 298 181-8
www.regenthotels.com

A short, fifty-minute flight from Bangkok, this five-star luxury hotel with a spa is built, Thai-pavilion style, around a working rice paddy. The Spa offers excellent Thai massages and a range of other body and facial treatments based on local herbs and other regional products.

Chiva-Som International Health Resort
73/4 Petchkasem Road
Hua Hin 77110, Thailand
Tel: (+66) 32 536 536
www.chivasom.net/indexa.html

Chiva-Som is situated in the old royal capital, Hua Hin, on the Gulf of Thailand only forty-five minutes from Bangkok. It is dedicated to spa treatments and offers luxury accommodation in a tranquil setting of pavilions by the beach. The food is grown in the spa's own organic gardens and orchards. The emphasis here is on rebalancing your life with a more nutritious diet and quieting of the mind.

The Oriental, Bangkok
48 Oriental Avenue
Bangkok 10500, Thailand
Tel: (+662) 659-9000
www.mandarin-oriental.com/bangkok/

To gain access to The Oriental Spa, built in an old steak house, you must take the hotel's complimentary boat across the river. The little excursion makes you feel as though you are leaving all your cares behind. Some members of the spa's staff have studied traditional Thai medicines and offer a healing regimen that employs them. Unlike most hotel spas, families are welcome and there are facilities for the disabled and elderly. The spa advocates a distinctive menu—the Cuisine Minceur—and spa dishes are prepared in a separate section of the hotel's kitchen.

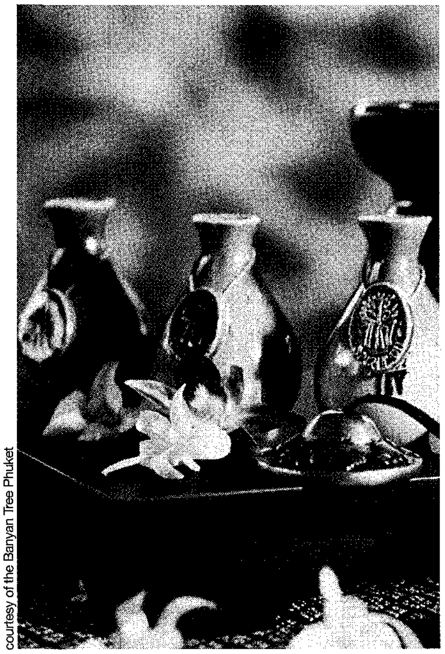
Banyan Tree Phuket
33 Moo 4 Srisoonthorn Road Cherngtalay
Talang, Phuket 83110, Thailand
Tel: (66-76) 324 374
www.banyantree.phuket.com/

The first luxury garden spa established in Southeast Asia, Banyan Tree offers an exquisite setting and extensive treatment regimens. The spa has developed its own line of aromatherapy essential oils made from local herbs and plants. It also boasts an innovative style of spa cuisine.

Information on these and other Thai spas can be found at www.epinions.com/lodg-Accommodations-Asia-All-Thailand-Spas?sp=ink *and at* www.spas.about.com/travel/spas/cs/thailandresort/index.htm.

courtesy of The Regent Chiang Mai Resort/Luca Tettoni

A STATE OF WELL-BEING
The Thai approach to inner beauty includes a multitude of healing therapies.



courtesy of the Banyan Tree Phuket

SENSORY ADVENTURE
Thai spa treatments utilize a menu of herbs and aromatic oils to stimulate and soothe.

Thai massage—a combination of acupressure and manipulation—is a strong massage that restores the body's natural balance of energy. Pressure, applied along the energy lines of the body, is combined with muscle-stretching procedures. This is believed to stimulate energy flow and ease muscle tension, replacing stress with an invigorating feeling that is at the same time curiously peaceful.

For Thai massage loose clothing is worn. The masseuse makes small movements through the thin cloth, working his fingers deep into the muscles. The requisite hour that a massage takes sounds like a long time, but when it is over you are left feeling divinely relaxed.

According to traditional Thai beliefs, herbs serve to nourish the human body. Different spices and herbs meet different needs. Nutmeg is used in a warming oil which is ideal for deep-tissue massage. Wild mint is refreshing and instills energy. A scrub made of tangerine peel stimulates the skin. Prai or Thai ginger root is famous for its skin-conditioning qualities, and ylang-ylang's relaxing sweet oil is often used as a base in perfumes. Thailand is rich in herbs and spices, which are used for both cooking and healing. Lemongrass adds zest to Thai green curry, and when added to massage oil, its natural fragrance will stay with you for hours.

There's a wealth of sybaritic Thai spas that cater to everyone from honeymooners to overworked rock stars to jet-lagged executives. But whether you have a week or a weekend, narrowing the choices isn't going to be easy.

(Nell Nelson is a food and travel writer based in Hong Kong.)

For more information on Thailand, contact the **Tourism Authority of Thailand** at **212-432-0433**, 1-800-THAILAND (outside New York), or visit **www.tourismthailand.org**.

amazing
THAILAND

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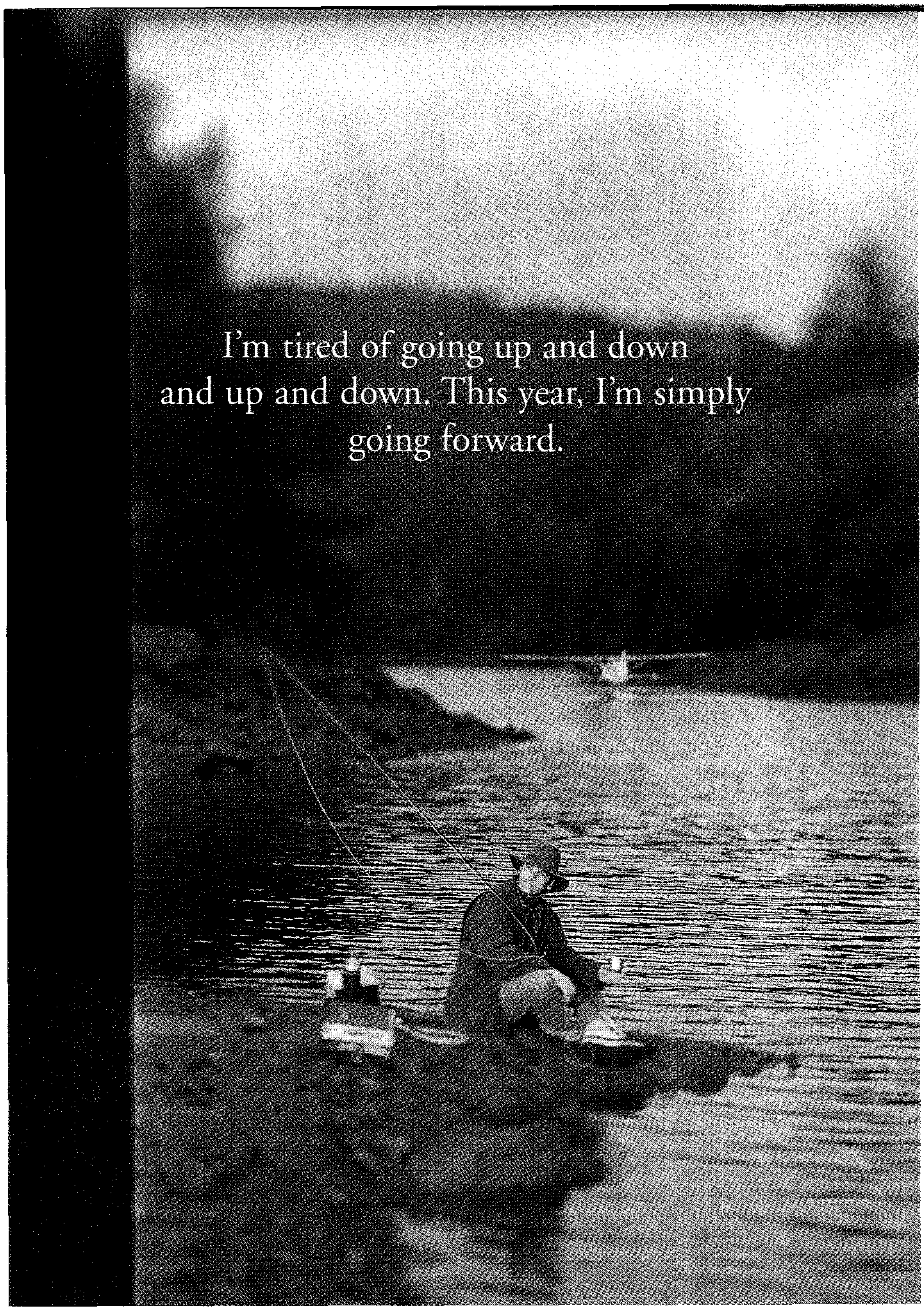
I'm tired of going up and down and up and down. This year, I'm simply going forward.

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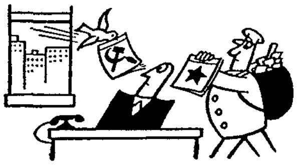
NYFF51

THE NEW YORKER

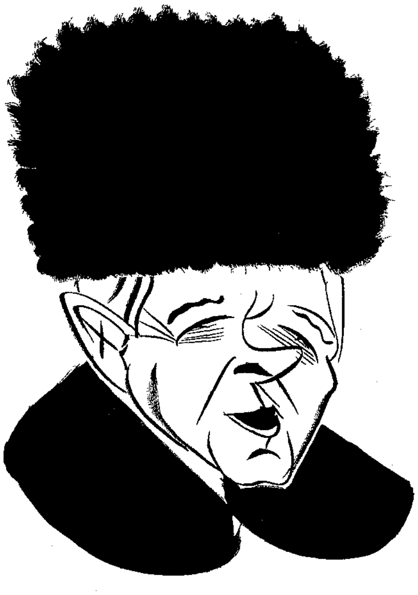
THE TALK OF THE TOWN

COMMENT
THE MISSING MAN



Vanity is no small component of political ambition, so the American Founders, like the British royals they ousted, hired portrait painters to capture their images. Posterity, they were convinced, would be grateful. They were right; we are grateful for even the secondary documents—Washington's Farewell Address, the Jefferson-Adams letters—and Gilbert Stuart's canvases, too. The greatest share of our shared good fortune resides in that spontaneous combustion of thought and action, the freakish appearance of a highly varied array of Enlightenment thinkers who, for all their differences and blind spots, established the permanent arrangements of American liberty.

This summer, the Russian people will commemorate (at least in some muted, rueful form) the tenth anniversary of the collapse of the "August coup," which led to the first flickers of democratic nationhood in their thousand-year history. Expect no triumphal fanfare, no fireworks. Expect no portraits of the first Russian President, Boris Yeltsin, or of his successor, Vladimir Putin. (Russians with a memory of Soviet iconography—those enormous Orwellian faces parading by on May Day—have no need of more portraits.) Hopes have lately receded to the vanishing point, but there was a time, particularly in the early nineties, when mention of "democratic Russia" was neither ironic nor disdainful. There was talk, however naïve, of a historic miracle, of a peaceful transition from autocracy to popular governance, of Russian constitutionalism. A decade later, the basic institutions of public administration and welfare are in catastrophic condition, wide-scale corruption is the economic norm, and the guarantors of liberty are, at best, in jeopardy. Yeltsin, who had begun with such bravado, lumbered out of office a moribund and degraded man—but not before endorsing Putin, a career officer in the secret police. The country is now so demoralized that it has readily accepted Putin's implicit grand bargain: to suspend further democratic transition in favor of essential order. Putin's popular support is enormous, and there is no opposition. Symbols of the Soviet state, including the old anthem, have been brought back. More than half the Russian people favor a return to state censorship.



Andrei Sakharov

As the years have gone by, it has become clear that among the most significant differences between late-eighteenth-century America and post-Soviet Russia is their respective founding generations. Moral and intellectual leadership may be a luxury item in a mature state, but it seems a necessity in the earliest days. Russians habitually think of their country as both great and star-crossed, and perhaps its worst stroke of bad luck in recent times was that Andrei Dmitriyevich Sakharov did not live longer than he did. Sakharov, who died in December of 1989, would have been eighty this month. As a thinker, as a man of uncanny judgment and courage, he was the one figure in the drama of the Soviet collapse who was the equal of Jefferson, Adams, and the rest.

Sakharov's original renown, along with his unique plane of regard, came from science. He was one of the finest physicists of his generation, an inventor of the Soviet hydrogen bomb. Then, like something out of mythology, the creator of a force capable of destroying the world tried to save it; Sakharov turned against the bomb, calling on Khrushchev to uphold a moratorium on nuclear test-

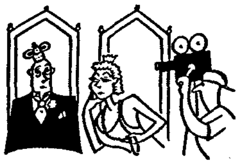
ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOM BACHTELL

ing, and then became the leader of the dissident movement. For years, his modest apartment, on Chkalova Street in Moscow, seemed the moral center of an immoral empire. Working with his wife, Elena Bonner, he wrote essays, signed petitions, gave interviews, went on hunger strikes, visited courtrooms and prisons, and generally used the prestige of his first career to stand up to the Soviet leadership. Finally, in 1980, the Politburo exiled him to the closed city of Gorky, and he lived there until December of 1986, when Mikhail Gorbachev, in an effort to win support from the West and from his own country's intellectuals, brought him home. “Go back to your patriotic work!” Gorbachev nervily told him. As a member of the new Congress of People's Deputies, Sakharov transformed the causes of the dissident movement into founding principles for a potential democratic state. Like Chekhov, he called on all Russians to squeeze from themselves the last vestiges of slavery.

Were Sakharov alive today, he would surely be campaigning in opposition to Putin. He would make every attempt to rouse the Russian public from its apathy and the Bush Administration from its decision to disengage. He would not allow the political discussion in Russia to reside in one place, in the Kremlin; he would not allow technocratic order to pass for human idealism. “Other civilizations, perhaps more successful ones, may exist an infinite number of times on the preceding and following pages of the Book of the Universe,” Sakharov wrote in his Nobel Prize lecture. “Yet we should not minimize our sacred endeavors in the world, where, like faint glimmers in the dark, we have emerged for a moment from the nothingness of unconsciousness into material existence. We must make good the demands of reason and create a life worthy of ourselves and of the goals we only dimly perceive.” Sakharov's was a higher order of political and human ambition than anything now heard across Russia, and, until his inheritors appear, it will be hard to think of the country as more than a dream gone wrong.

—*David Remnick*

THE PICTURES
WES ANDERSON IN HAMILTON HEIGHTS



Last week, Wes Anderson, the director, was working up in Hamilton Heights, filming the final stretch of “The Royal Tenenbaums,” his third movie (this one budgeted at a “modest” twenty-five million dollars). He celebrated his thirty-second birthday on the set—over a peanut-butter-and-jelly sandwich, his daily staple meal—with his crew and with his actors, Gene Hackman, Anjelica Huston, Ben Stiller, Bill Murray, Danny Glover, and Owen Wilson, who appeared in Anderson's movie “Bottle Rocket” and who also co-wrote the “Tenenbaums” script. Everyone except Anderson ate a regular meal, and then they brought out a traditional cake, a “Happy Birthday” banner, and presents.

“He's the first director who doesn't scare me,” Anjelica Huston said. “This is the first time a director asked me what I think of something. I suggested wearing my grandmother Rhea Gore's locket in the movie.”

“Most directors only want it their way,” said Bill Murray, who appeared in Anderson's last movie, “Rushmore.” “This guy wants it to be right.”

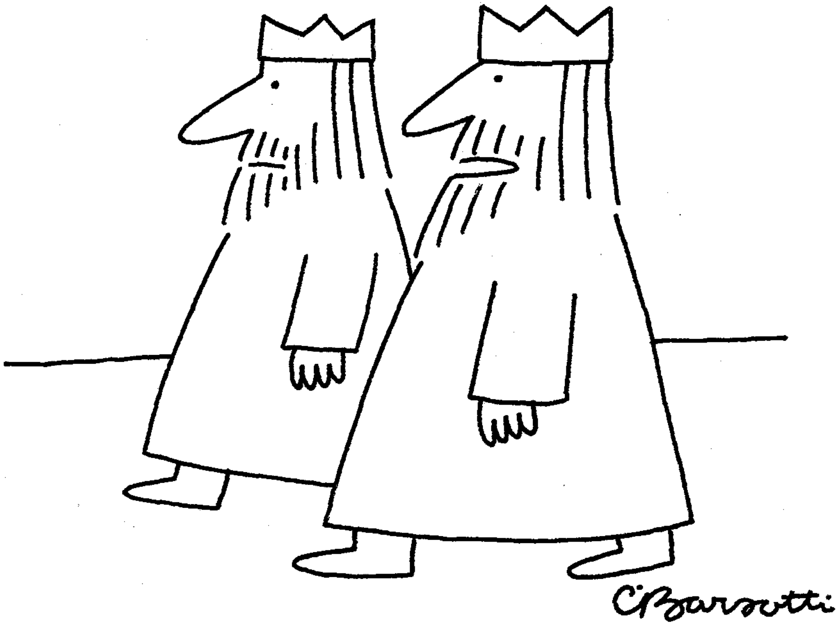
The object of their ruminations may be the most waifish-looking film director since François Truffaut. He has, from the top, nondescript brown hair, sharp features, clear-frame glasses, shoulders permanently hunched in behind-the-camera position, and no noticeable hips. On the set, he was elegantly clothed in mauve corduroy pants, a maroon corduroy sports jacket, and red sneakers.

Bill Murray said, “This guy has his own tailor. It's so nice, for a change, to like a guy and not begrudge him anything.”

“There aren't even restrictions in his clothes,” Anjelica Huston said. “His pants are custom-made with the crotch coming down about four inches above his knees. He's so skinny, and he gets skinnier by the day. We all want to hold him and mother him. We're so proud of him.”

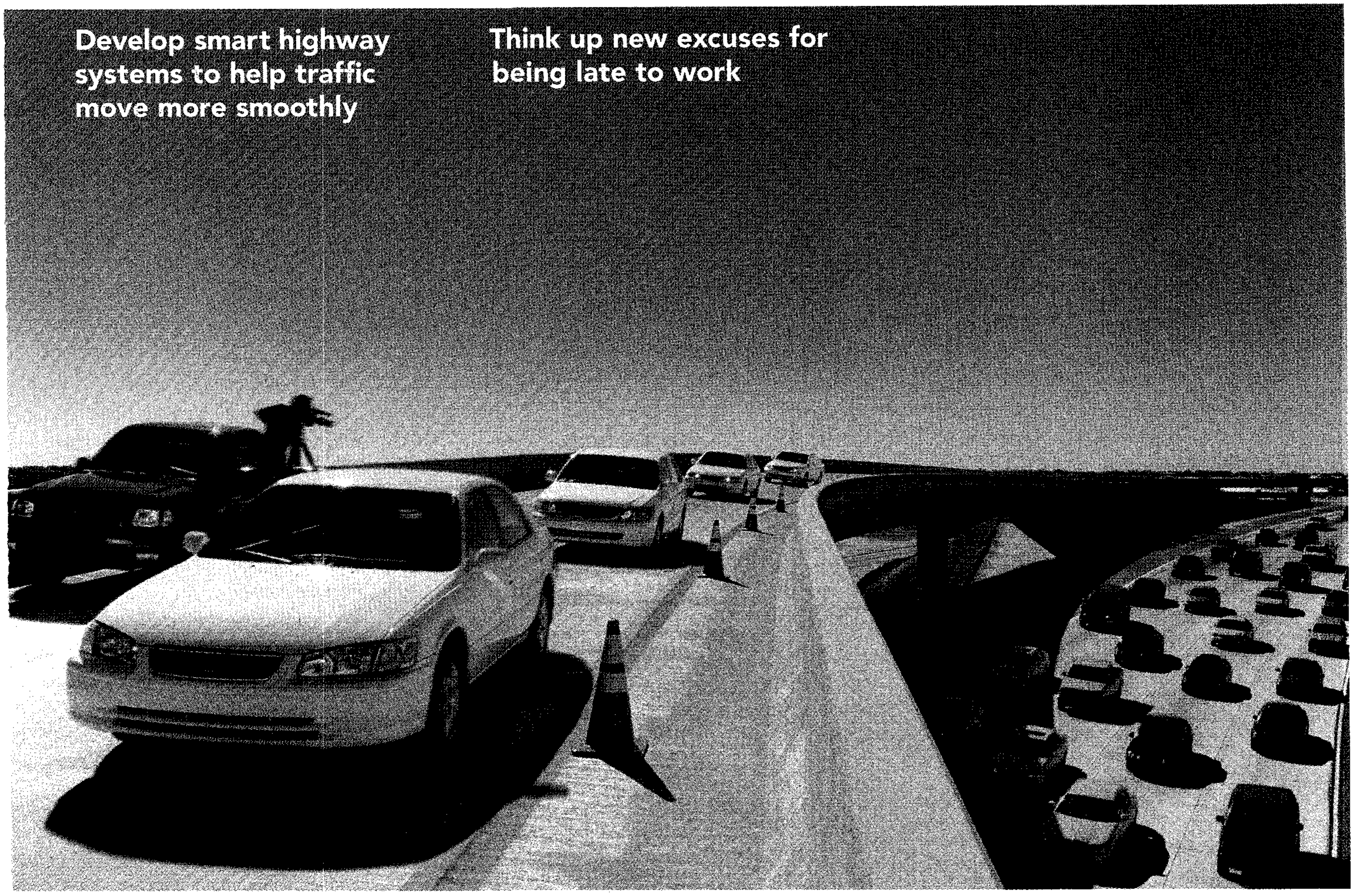
The movie, Anderson said, “is about a family of talented people who peaked early and got short-circuited. They fell apart, and then they try to get together again in new ways. It's not about my own family, but I use tons of stuff about us. I'm the middle of three boys. My older brother, Mel, was a doctor in the Air Force. Eric, four years younger than me, is an artist, the concept illustrator of my movies. We're from Houston, Texas. My parents are divorced. My mom is an artist and an archeologist, but now she works as a real-estate agent. My father was an amateur race-car driver, but now he's in public relations.”

The main set for “The Royal Tenen-



“I know about bread and circuses, but what the hell is T-ball?”

TODAY **TOMORROW** **TOYOTA**


Develop smart highway systems to help traffic move more smoothly
Think up new excuses for being late to work

"The dog ate my alarm clock."

"My long-lost uncle dropped in for tea."

"A squirrel short-circuited the garage door."

There will always be plenty of excuses for not getting to work on time. But in the future, traffic may not be one of them.

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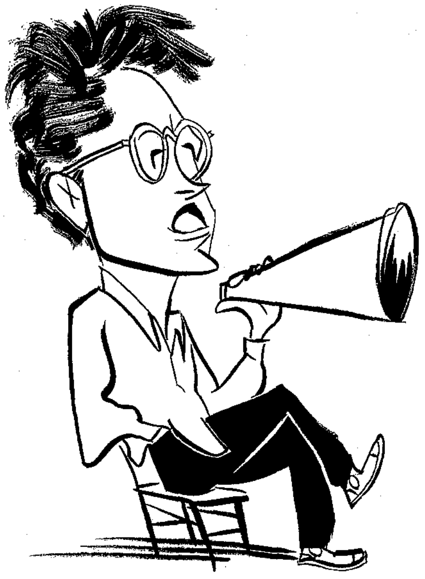
baums" is a nineteenth-century red brick town house a few blocks from City College, near Alexander Hamilton's house. Last week, Anderson was directing a technically difficult forty-five-second outdoor shot at the house with a Panavision camera at the top of a huge crane on a dolly. Most of the key cast members participated, as did a wrecked white 1967 Austin-Healey convertible, a fire engine, firemen, a Dalmatian, and a number of cops. With all this going on, only one person raised his voice. It was the Dalmatian's handler: "On your feet! On your *feet!*" The dog complied. The shot was a success.

"Very brave shot," the producer, Barry Mendel, said.

"Wes can tell a personal story in a moving but still comic way," Bill Murray said. "Usually, these stories are sentimental or vicious. He makes me feel different, almost like I'm not obliged to be entertaining. I don't find myself pushing or selling my scenes. My own persona is greatly diminished."

"He's so stylized," Gene Hackman said. "This picture has a sense of fable."



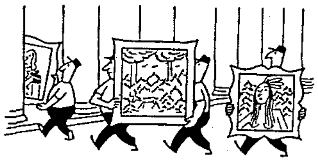
Wes Anderson

An old Indian man named Kumar, who moved from Bombay to the United States as a juggler during the Second World War ("I can still juggle twelve or thirteen plates at a time"), is in the movie, too. He met Anderson in Dallas in the early nineties. "I ran the Cosmic Cup, a health-food restaurant and yoga center with jazz," Kumar said. "As a college student, Wes used to hang out at my Cosmic Cup with Owen Wilson. Now he puts me in all his movies. I play Gene's buddy in this movie. Wes lifts me up. He has trust, an interesting mind, and humility. That's the beauty of him."

Anjelica Huston said, "I've started smoking again. When I stopped smoking, I was so depressed, I cried for months. Now I'm happy. This picture gives me license to be myself. I'm fatalistic."

—*Lillian Ross*

BERLIN POSTCARD
HERR BERGGRUEN'S BLUE PERIOD



Heinz Berggruen's problem early last Tuesday wasn't the sixty-five million dollars that four of his Cézannes and one of his van Goghs had brought him in twenty vertiginous minutes at auction in New York. His problem was the fifty-odd million that one Cézanne and one very big van Gogh had not brought him. At 1 A.M., at home in Berlin, Berggruen stood by his phone as seven of his paintings went under the hammer at Phillips, de Pury's spring sale of Impressionist and modern art, on East Fifty-seventh Street. The fifth lot of the night, Berggruen's biggest Cézanne, "La Montagne Sainte-Victoire," went for a brisk $38.5 million, the most ever for a landscape by the artist and the second-largest amount ever paid for a Cézanne. But van Gogh's "Le Jardin d'Automne," the masterpiece that had been expected to crown the sale with another forty million for Berggruen and the auction house, failed to sell. At 2 A.M. Berlin time, Berggruen's son Olivier called his father from Fifty-seventh Street with the news that his pictures had pulled just $64.7 million from a skittish market.

"I said to Olivier, 'Is that all you have to offer me?' " Berggruen said later that day, in his study. "Maybe I'm a very greedy guy! I want more. Then I took a tranquillizer and went to sleep."

To get the paintings, the auction house put up a guarantee reported to be in the low nine figures, but, still, the fact that the two canvases had not sold clearly bothered Berggruen. His famous eye had been questioned. "I do think the van Gogh will find a home, but there are no sure things!" Berggruen, a diminutive, white-haired eighty-seven-year-old, said. "There's been a boom, and now there's a sort of unease. Very roller-coastery affair, lots of ups and downs."

Berggruen's progress through the twentieth century was a roller-coaster affair, too: born to a bourgeois Jewish family in Berlin, he became a journalist, fled the Nazis in 1936 for California, had a love affair with Frida Kahlo in New York, and returned to Europe as a U.S. Army staff sergeant in the Second World War. After the war, he stayed in Paris, where he opened a gallery, becoming a dealer for, and a friend to, Picasso, Miró, Man Ray, Dora Maar, the Giacometti brothers, Max Ernst, and the Klee, Matisse, and Kandinsky families. Beginning with a hundred dollars that he paid for a Klee in Chicago in 1940, he has also been a discerning collector.

In 1980, he gave up running his Paris gallery so that he could collect full time, and he has yet to stop. A coffee table in front of the couch in Berggruen's study is stacked three high and five across with auction-house catalogues; even as he has been deaccessioning eight-figure Cézannes, he has also been shopping. "It's like a drug," he said. "My Paris gallery was just the pretext for me to go out and find paintings. I was my own best client."

Rather than go to the auction ("I didn't want to attend my own burial"), Berggruen spent last week at home, in Berlin. He and his wife live in an apartment that the city of Berlin built specially for them, opposite the Charlottenburg Palace, in a domed nineteenth-century building, where the Berggruen Collection—consisting of a hundred and seventy Picassos, Matisses, Braques, Giacomettis, and Klees—is housed. Consequently, Berggruen is one door away from his pictures, even if they no longer belong to him. In 1995, fifty-nine years after the Nazis forced him into exile, he pulled these works out of what had been a loan to England's National Gallery and moved them to Berlin. Last year, he sold them to the German government, for the bargain price of a hundred and ten million dollars; Berggruen wanted the paintings back in his home town. Here were the "degenerate" artists whom the Nazis had banned, brought back to Berlin by one of its surviving Jews. And

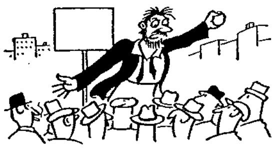
Berggruen went back with them, becoming a Berliner again.

"I've been here five years now," Berggruen said. "I talk to people, I hang around—it's open house, *na*? The Germans didn't expect this. They love it! They get down on their knees. Sometimes it's a bit too German. You know, they did that also for Hitler. 'Your wonderful pictures, it's so *herrlich*.'... Sometimes I'm tempted to say to them, 'You were the same people who said Hitler was *herrlich*, *nicht*?' But I'm certain they love it. If the reaction had been different, if people were saying, 'Why is he bothering us with these Picassos?,' then I would say fuck you, and take my wares elsewhere."

He laughed and jumped up, and said, "Come, let's go look at some pictures." He opened a white steel door, and, suddenly, he was in the museum: French and Polish tourists wandered around, admiring the Klees and Giacomettis that had once belonged to him. He skipped past them down the stairs, heading for the Picassos—seventy-five of them—on the second floor. He stopped in the wartime Dora Maar room. "Now, here are some ladies," he said. At the sight of him, the guards stood a little straighter.

—*Guy Martin*

EXTRA CREDIT
THE GREAT UNWASHED



"We're walking out, right this minute—can't talk—can you call me back?" Anna Falicov said over a friend's cell phone at three-forty-five last Tuesday afternoon. Falicov is one of twenty-seven Harvard students who had spent the previous twenty-one days occupying two and a half rooms and a stretch of hallway on the ground floor of the university's main administration building, Massachusetts Hall, protesting the school's habit of paying hundreds of its workers—dining-hall staff and janitors—less than a minimum "living wage" of ten dollars and twenty-five cents an hour.

The students, who had entered Mass Hall on April 18th in winter coats, expecting their sit-in to last no longer than a few days, emerged into Harvard Yard on one of the finest days of an exquisite New England spring. They were greeted by a whooping victory rally of several hundred supporters—workers and faculty members and union leaders and clergymen and politicians and, of course, fellow-students, scores of whom had spent the previous three weeks camped outside the occupied building in a sprawling tent city. That morning, the college administration had agreed to a program of labor reforms—accelerated contract renegotiations, a moratorium on the subcontracting of jobs to agencies that do not meet on-campus employment standards, and the inclusion of students and workers on a committee to review and revise Harvard's labor practices—and by 5:30 P.M. the rally was still roaring. Falicov's friend's cell phone served as a live radio feed, broadcasting a chorus of "Solidarity Forever," which soon gave way, amid cheers and screams, to a joyously bastardized rendition of the Beatles: "Ob-la-di, ob-la-da... Can't we get a living wage now?"

The cell phone belonged to Brent Zettel, a senior from San Diego majoring in government, whom Falicov described as "kind of alternative-looking" and "goofy." "Actually, I'm a punk kid," he said. His normal costume consists of spiked hair, blue Converse high-tops, "usually some kind of pants, and usually a T-shirt." Going into Mass Hall, however, Zettel had spruced himself up with a clean blue button-down shirt, because, he said, "we all wanted to do our best to make ourselves respectable." Once in the building, the students were prohibited from receiving any material support from the outside, except for food and medicine. They wore the same clothes for weeks. One day, a receptionist who had to share her office with them decided that they were smelling a bit overripe, and she smuggled in a bag of thrift-shop clothing. "I got a very nice new shirt I'm real psyched about," Zettel said. Now that the protest was over, he said, "It's a little bit, in a weird way, like being on parole—strange to be outside the building and walking around. It feels good to be free, not that we were in any way trapped—we were in because we wanted to make something happen, and we did. But it was getting tough in there." The activists were planning a party that night, and Zettel was looking forward to his first beer in nearly a month, but he said, "I think the first thing I'm going to do is take a nap."

During the weeks of the sit-in, the students inside Mass Hall remained in constant communication with the world outside, thanks to an arsenal of cell phones and laptops, but their most gratifying contacts came through windows that opened from their occupied territory onto the Yard. Falicov, an urban-studies major, also from San Diego, who is blond and believes she looks "sort of Eastern European, sort of average everything," said, "Taking over a building is not what I ideally would have wanted to do for three weeks. But what I learned in that space supersedes anything I'd learned in class—from how power works to how to write a press release and how as an individual to become part of a bigger group that accomplishes a lot." She said, "My professors were very supportive, and I actually had three lectures delivered to me from outside the window. Yesterday, I was leaning out the window for an hour and a half learning about the institutionalization of party structures in Latin America."

When the rally ended on Tuesday afternoon, Benjamin McKean, a junior social-studies major from Los Angeles, realized that he was late for his Phi Beta Kappa induction dinner, and he hurried over to what he called "this room of Harvard people in coats and ties," still dressed in the Chili John's restaurant T-shirt that he had worn throughout the sit-in. Everyone applauded, and, he said, "It was nice to have hot food that I wasn't eating off the floor, and to be talking to people I hadn't been talking to for twenty-four hours a day for twenty-one days."

Now, bathed and laundered, the living-wage campaigners are cramming for exams and wondering what, if any, disciplinary action they might face. Meanwhile, a group of Harvard alumni is threatening to withhold donations to the school until a shower is installed in the president's office to make future sit-ins easier. But Madeleine (Maddy) Elfenbein, a freshman from New York, seemed to think that was unnecessary. "The degree to which American society fetishizes the shower is entirely excessive," she said.

—*Philip Gourevitch*

THE FINANCIAL PAGE

CISCO-HOLICS ANONYMOUS

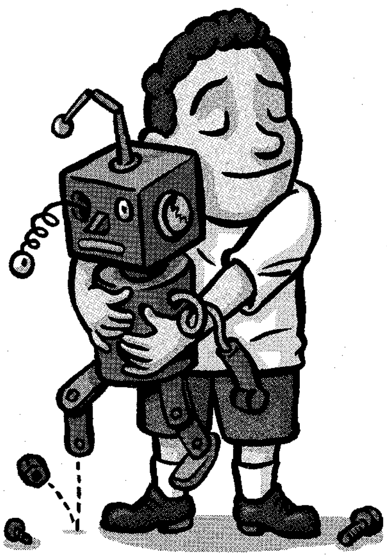
Every bull market has its darling. In the nineteen-twenties, it was RCA. In the nineteen-sixties, it was Xerox. And in the nineteen-nineties it was Cisco. By the beginning of last year, Cisco Systems was to the New Economy what George Washington had been to the young republic: the embodiment of its promise, the repository of its myths, and the leader on whom everything depended. ("Without Cisco, there would be no Internet," one Wall Street analyst said in 1999.) Cisco was hugely profitable, and in the nineties its stock rose eighty-nine thousand per cent. *Fortune* put John Chambers, Cisco's C.E.O., on its cover, asking, "Is John Chambers the best C.E.O. on earth?" We all knew the answer. Everyone, it seemed, owned the stock. Fourteen months ago, Cisco became the most valuable company on earth.

That didn't last long. Since then, Cisco's stock has fallen seventy-three per cent. John Chambers has become known more for his kvetching about being the victim of a global economic slowdown than for his managerial brilliance. And Cisco's business—making routers and switches for the Internet—looks increasingly shaky. Last week, Cisco announced that in the most recent quarter its sales had fallen by thirty per cent and its earnings by seventy-five per cent. Most amazing, the company said that it was writing off as a total loss $2.2 billion in inventory, which in English means that it had spent two billion dollars on raw materials, parts, and products that it had no hope of either selling or using. Suddenly, Cisco looked less like George Washington and more like Warren G. Harding.

Cisco is still first in the hearts of its investors, though. Or so it would seem, judging by the market's reaction. The news of the write-off has barely scratched the stock. In fact, over the last five weeks it's gone up forty-three per cent. The company essentially admitted that it has no clue about when business is going to get better, yet, even now, more money managers own Cisco than own any other technology stock. What was that again about love's being blind?

Cisco, great as it may have been, never deserved to be the most valuable company on earth. The market said that Cisco, at its peak, was worth five hundred and fifty billion dollars. That meant that if you owned shares you were expecting the company (whether you knew it or not) to generate, in the future, five hundred and fifty billion dollars in profits. Not sales. Profits. To do that, Cisco would have had to stay enormously profitable and grow at a ridiculously fast rate—say, thirty per cent per year—for the next twenty-five years or so.

Such expectations were a bit unreasonable. No company Cisco's size has ever grown as fast as thirty per cent a year even for a decade straight. Basically, investors were expecting that by 2025 Cisco would be as big as the entire economy of the United States is now. What's more, Cisco is in a business characterized by rapid technological change and by innovations that can make products obsolete overnight. Hot young companies are nipping at its heels. And, as the past year has demonstrated, Cisco is incapable of predicting what's going to happen in six months, let alone twenty-five years. Back in October, Cisco was insisting that it would grow somewhere between thirty and fifty per cent this year. That hasn't happened. And last fall and winter, even as the economy slowed, the company doubled its inventory, which is why it got stuck with stuff it couldn't sell. Now, that's foresight.



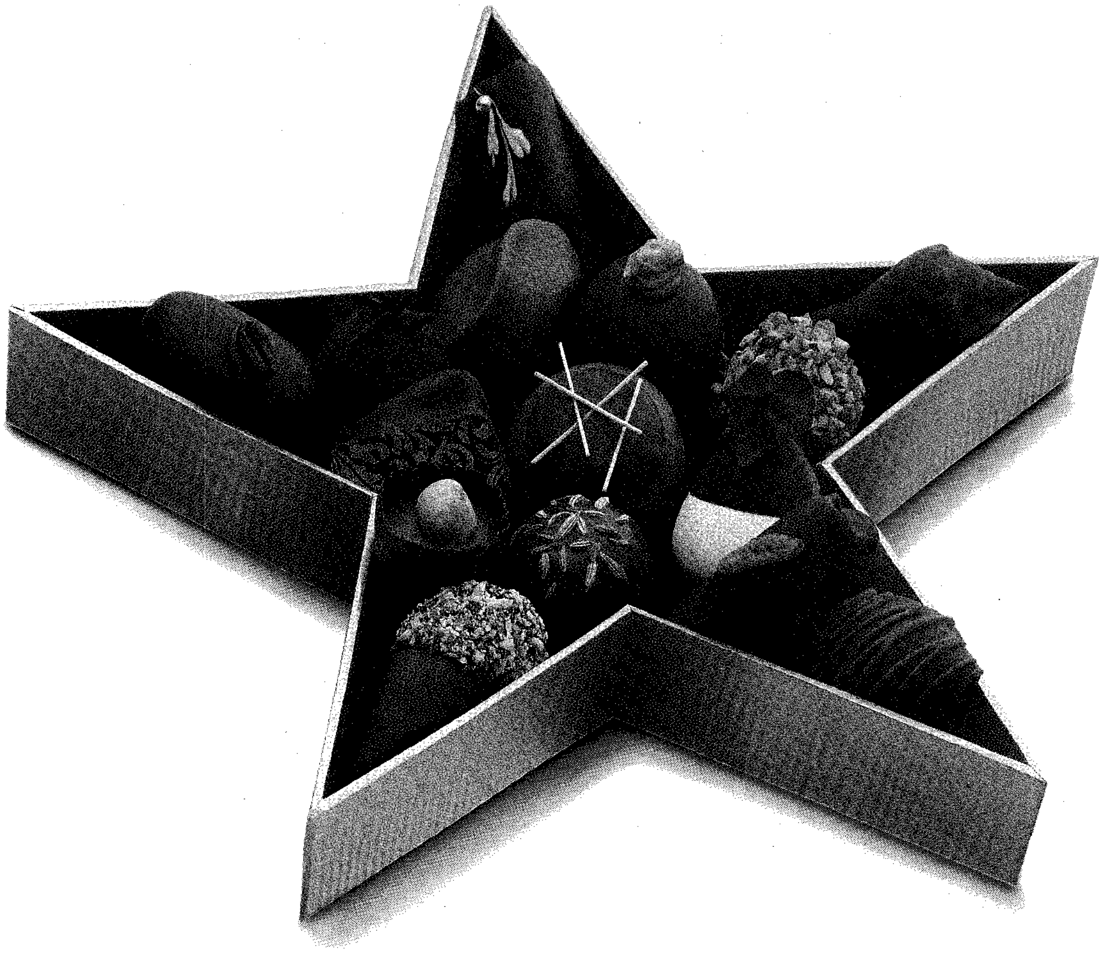
Despite all this, Wall Street's love affair with Cisco isn't just another manifestation of the mania that gave billion-dollar valuations to money-losing novelty acts like Pets.com and Theglobe.com. The typical dot-com had no track record and no real business model, and was piling up losses at a frightening pace. People bought Internet stocks not because they believed in the companies but because they believed that other people would buy those same stocks from them, at a higher price, the next day (or the next week). Cisco, on the other hand, was a real company, with real profits and real growth. Last year, Cisco made $2.7 billion. It owned more than three-quarters of its biggest market and was growing as fast as any company its size had ever grown in history. The people who owned stock in Cisco (whom one columnist called "the happiest group of people on earth") would tell you these things with breezy assurance. In their minds, they had discovered a blue-chip growth stock—reliable, like G.E. or Wal-Mart, yet limitless, like, well, nothing the world had ever seen.

No such animal. Those investors had taken a fine idea and, inadvertently, put it to foolish use. The fine idea was Warren Buffett's: when you buy a stock, plan to hold on to it for life. Buffett recognized that it could be too hard to time the stock market's every twitch. Better to buy the long-term powerhouses and hold on. If you picked the right ones, you'd get a piece of their ever-growing profits.

The people who held on to Cisco when the company became more valuable than G.E. and Microsoft thought they'd picked one of the right ones. They interpreted the old buy-and-hold gospel to mean that, when it came to their chosen one, no price was too high. But they overlooked Buffett 3:16—in value investing, value matters. No matter how great a company is, its stock can cost too much. The real fanatics of the market boom weren't the pale day traders flipping Zapata shares sixteen times a week but, rather, the otherwise reasonable folks whose approach to investing ultimately boiled down to a bumper-sticker slogan: "I'll give up my Cisco when they pry it from my cold, dead hands."

—*James Surowiecki*

CHRISTOPH NIEMANN



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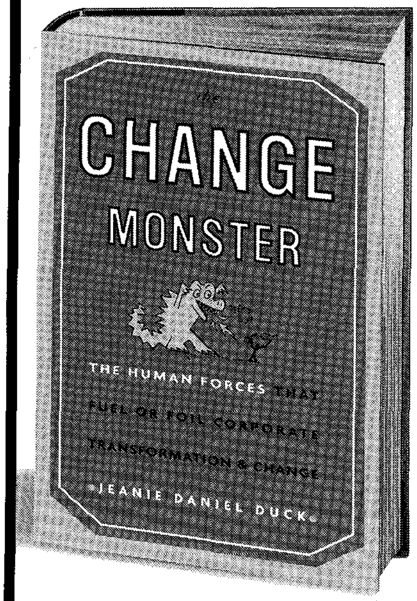
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NEW YORK JOURNAL

A WALK ON THE HIGH LINE

The allure of a derelict railroad track in spring.

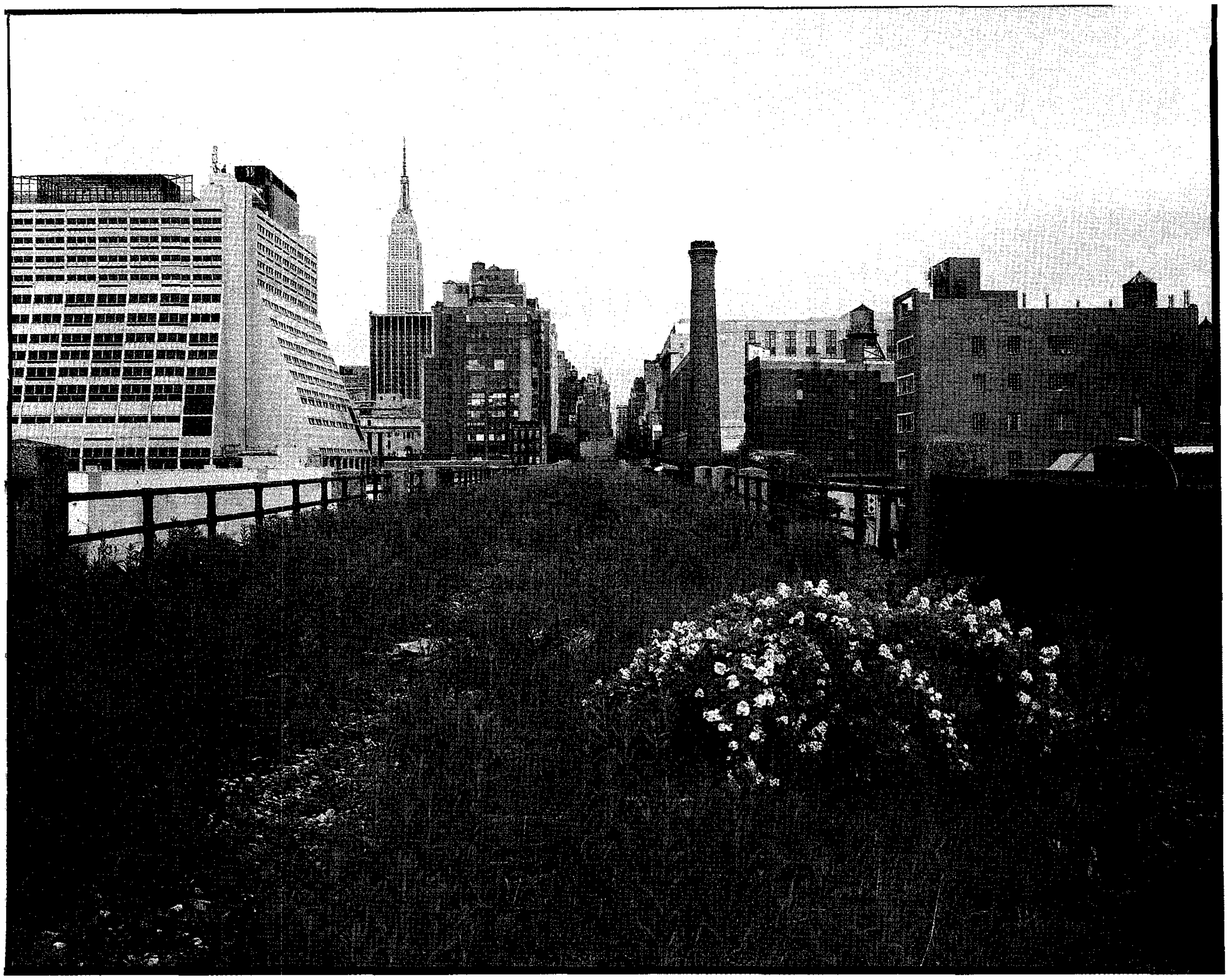
BY ADAM GOPNIK

High is to New York what wet is to Venice—the necessary condition that has become the romantic condition. To be up, and above, though still felt as imprisonment in too many office-closeted lives, can, with the addition of a breeze or an eccentricity, become an escape, a source of renewal, and even provide a feeling of belonging. In Manhattan, to look down is not always to look down on. It is a communal experience, with something of the feeling of sailors in crow's nests looking at other sailors, a fellowship of the air—not avoiding the storm, exactly, but at least sharing news of it early. Moguls in the spires of skyscrapers stare at other moguls, and millionaire actors wave across the Park at other millionaire actors, and tourists go to the top of the World Trade Center to gaze with binoculars at tourists in the crown of the Statue of Liberty, and, if people crowd the Brooklyn Bridge, it is not to jump but to admire the falcons' scrape on one of the towers, an enviable home up high. When Superman is spotted in the sky above the city, people think mildly that he might be something else, a bird or a plane . . . The archeology of Manhattan is reversed: the past is not buried in the ground but held up in the air, on the upper floors. You see old things clearly: ghostly unlit Longchamps signs and forgotten Deco-Aztec metal detailing and abandoned penthouse night clubs. In New York, the overhead viewpoint is curiously peaceful and nostalgic—the beautiful vista, rather than the sublime. (The sublime vista is subterranean—the No. 6 train approaching the Fourteenth Street station through the gloom, eyes on fire.)

The most peaceful high place in New York right now is a stretch of viaduct called the High Line. The High Line is a derelict elevated railroad track, about two stories high, running a mile and a third along the western edge of the city, from Thirty-fourth Street to Gansevoort Street. It encloses about eight acres, or half a million square feet, of taffy-pulled, thirty-to-fifty-foot-wide horizontal space. Many people who pass under it think that it is an old El track. In fact, it is, or was, a New York Central Railroad track, used for fifty years to convey goods from all over America to little shuntings among the West Side warehouses. For more than two decades—ever since the last three carloads of frozen turkeys made their transit to Gansevoort Street—it has been under a provisional death sentence, condemned by the property owners caught in its shadow. But one thing or another has kept it from being torn down, and, just recently, it has become a gleam in the eye of some West Side do-gooders, who call themselves the Friends of the High Line and who see it as a potential midair park. The Giuliani administration has been hostile to the project—the Mayor's men apparently viewing it as exactly the kind of touchy-feely, hey, kids, let's make that broken-down railroad into a park!, Upper West Side quixotism that would leave the whole city carpeted with moss if left unchecked—but a lot of other local pols, topped off by Senator Clinton, are all for it.

For the moment, the High Line has gone not to wrack and ruin but to seed: weeds and grasses and even small trees sprout from the track bed. There are irises and lamb's ears and thistle-tufted onion grass, white-flowering bushes and pink-budded trees and grape hyacinths, and strange New York weeds that shoot straight up with horizontal arms, as though electrified. A single, improbable Christmas tree can be found there, and a flock of warblers have made themselves a home, too. In one sheltered stretch between two tall buildings is a stand of hardwood trees. The High Line combines the appeal of those fantasies in which New York has returned to the wild with an almost Zen quality of measured, peaceful distance.

The poet-keeper of the High Line is the photographer Joel Sternfeld. He has



The view looking east on Thirtieth Street, photographed by Joel Sternfeld, who wants to save a piece of New York as it really is.

COURTESY PACE MAC GILL

been taking pictures of it in all seasons for the past year, and he has a gift for seeing light and space and color—romantic possibility of every kind—where a less sensitive observer sees smudge and weed and ruin. He would not just like the High Line to be saved and made into a promenade; he would like the promenade as it exists now to be perpetuated, a piece of New York as it really is. Where many of the High Line's supporters see it as potential—they are not averse to picturing, in imagery that evokes the airy, weightless, jaunty style of an architect's rendering, picnic tables and monorails and sculpture parks—he sees it as a thing already accomplished, and wants to keep it more or less as it is.

"It's more of a path than a park," he said one recent afternoon at the beginning of a traverse. "And more of a Path than a path." (He makes caps with his eyebrows.) Several times a week, he lugs an immense, Mathew Brady-style eight-by-ten camera, complete with black silent-movie-comedy cloth, up to the tracks and, pulling it under fences and through sidings, records the High Line's moods and light.

"Central Park," he went on as he set up tripod and camera facing the river, to take a study of a chimney, beautiful in the grayish afternoon light, that stands starkly by the side of the tracks, "is really cosmetic in many ways. This is a true time landscape, a railroad ruin. The abandoned place is the place where seasonality resides. These little shoots—see this! This is the *real* look of spring. Central Park is a construct in so many ways. A beautiful construct, but made for an effect. This"—he gestured around the old track bed—"is what spring in New York actually looks like when it's left up to Spring."

Spring in New York looks like this: low grasses and weeds abound at shoe-top level and tawny grasses are folded over on each other, like winter wheat. The onion grass gives an acid smell if you get down close, and clover lends a sweetness. Knee-high plants that look like tarragon grow in neat rows and, as you look east, seem to enter into a distinct, perspective-keeping compact with the canyons of Thirty-first and Thirtieth Streets, whistling away toward the East River. It is quiet there, and the Hudson, which fills the vista in the opposite, or western, direction, suddenly seems not a distant rumored presence but the obvious point of the joke—the reason people settled this island in the first place. It is a mirror, bouncing off light and provoking breezes.

The High Line does not offer a God's-eye view of the city, exactly, but something rarer, the view of a lesser angel: of a cupid in a Renaissance painting, of the putti looking down on the Nativity manger. That little height makes even ugly things below look orderly and patterned. From the first section of the High Line, you see the cars of the

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we glimpse it sometimes, and nod our heads
when a grandfather dies.
Then we row for years on the midsummer
pond, ignorant and content. But a marriage,
that began without harm, scatters
into debris on the shore,
and a friend from school drops
cold on a rocky strand.
If a new love carries us
past middle age, our wife will die
at her strongest and most beautiful.
New women come and go. All go.
The pretty lover who announces
that she is temporary
is temporary. The bold woman,
middle-aged against our old age,
sinks under an anxiety she cannot withstand.
Another friend of decades estranges himself
in words that pollute thirty years.
Let us stifle under mud at the pond's edge
and affirm that it is fitting
and sweet to lose everything.

—*Donald Hall*

L.I.R.R. commuter trains, waiting; a man's voice, immense on a speaker, occasionally breaks the silence, calling out track numbers. On a ramp in the middle distance four trucks are parked, with enormous slanting letters offering this reiteration: RELIABLE, RELIABLE, RELIABLE, RELIABLE. In the far distance, a small building says O/V/E/R/S/E/A/S, each letter carefully painted beside a window, and, up above, DIAL JOE/1234. Alongside, a vast, low Federal Express depot sweeps away, the brutal lavender-and-orange FEDEX its only inscription. (It looks smugly back at its little shipping neighbor, as if to say, "Dial Joe? You gotta be kidding, I mean . . . Dial *Joe*?")

"It's a history of supercession, all visible," Sternfeld says. "First this railroad, and then overseas shipping, and then Federal Express." He was dismantling his tripod, since the picture he'd had in mind had struck a snag. The people who are addicted to the High Line, particularly Sternfeld, like to say that it offers a "transporting" experience, the experience of a pilgrimage more than a promenade; it does have a mythical aspect, with an Olympus in the Starrett-Lehigh Building, which looms, vast and glassy, to the west, and the superintending presence of two enormous goddesses, who look calmly down—one, its recessive Artemis, advertises the clothes of the Gap, the other, farther on, is Aphrodite, splayed out on a chair, and beckoning the pilgrim from the path on behalf of the Guess company. Right now, the girl in the Gap ad kept getting in the picture. ("She'll take over the photograph," Sternfeld says, with a practiced sigh. "She always does, and it gets a little obvious, you know, this world against this. A little too on the nose.")

"You know what I'm seeing!" he says suddenly, excited. "It's that beer bottle! It's prominent in a shot I took last fall—and it hasn't moved!" He walks over and, without picking it up or disturbing it, gently gazes down at the clear-glass bottle and shakes his head—amazed, like Proust, at the strange persistence of beauty in the face of time.

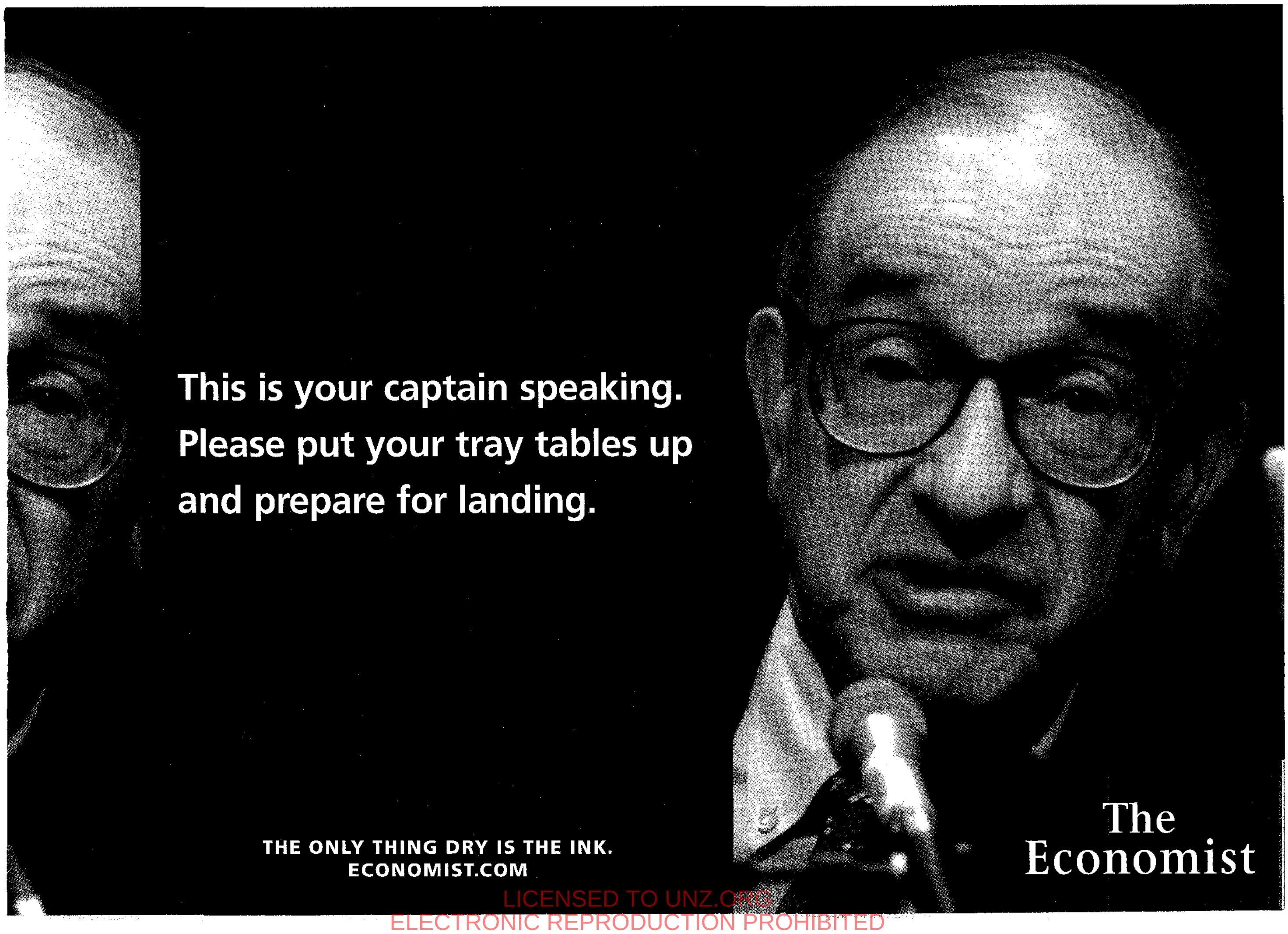
Now, down in the city, you see: a homeless men's encampment, laid out on a tarpaper roof. There are frying pans and boxes and big plastic tubs, and an exquisite wrought-iron chair, dragged out into the light. Someone has brought a television dish up to the High Line and fastened it to a railing, and someone else—one of the homeless guys, apparently—has parasited on a second cable, and run it down toward the Hooverville. The enormous girl on the Gap ad looks mutely away. A small switch hotel stands just south of the rails, with its telltale roof generators and towers.

Joel smiles. "There are no derelicts here," he says decisively, "and no rats—what would rats and derelicts do up here?—although the people who are trying to pull it down like to say there are. There was one homeless man up here last year. But he was fanatic about recycling."

There is a corrugated-metal fence at the end of this section of the path—why, no one is quite sure—and, once you've wriggled, sideways, through a hole that has been punched in it, a second, short placid section leads you to another fence. You have to crawl under that one, shimmying flat on your back.

But a surprise is waiting: a neatly ordered vista, among the grasses, of crocuses, daffodils, and tulips, and a dwarf maple and the smallest Christmas tree in the city, wrapped in lights. A white gangplank leads from the window of an apartment nearby onto the High Line. The apartment is rented, and the garden kept, by a designer named Ken Robson, who lives there with his elegant, nervous dachshund, Ross. Ken has been edgily walking out, pirate style, along his white gangplank high above the alley for about five years, carrying bulbs and seeds and Christmas lights and topsoil. "You can really dig right down into it," he says of the track bed. "It's good for growing."

The history and the politics of the High Line are just possible to summarize, though to do it plunges you into the New York place called the Alphabet Dimension, where government agencies and programs with strange acronyms and abbreviations award money and fight for power. In brief: When Conrail took over the New York Central, in 1980, nobody used the High Line anymore. When another rail company, CSX, acquired Conrail's tracks east of the Hudson, twenty years later, it left the High Line alone, too. Meanwhile, local property owners, under an umbrella group called C.P.O., or Chelsea Property Owners, had pressed the government, through the I.C.C. (the Interstate Commerce Commission), to force the railroad to tear down the unused line. (It can do this, by law, if a line is derelict; this section of railroad is not, strictly speaking, property but what is called an easement in the air, which can be forcibly torn down if it is no longer in use.) In 1992, the I.C.C., which has since become the S.T.B. (the Surface Transportation Board), gave Conrail a conditional abandonment order. Several tricky money questions—basically, who's going



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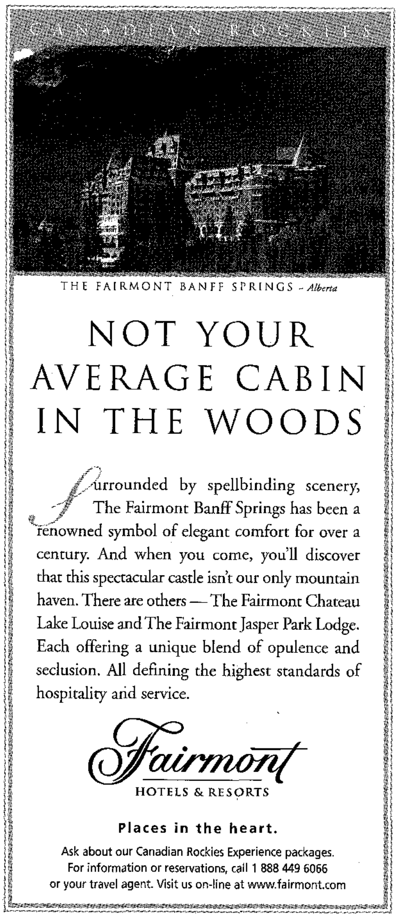
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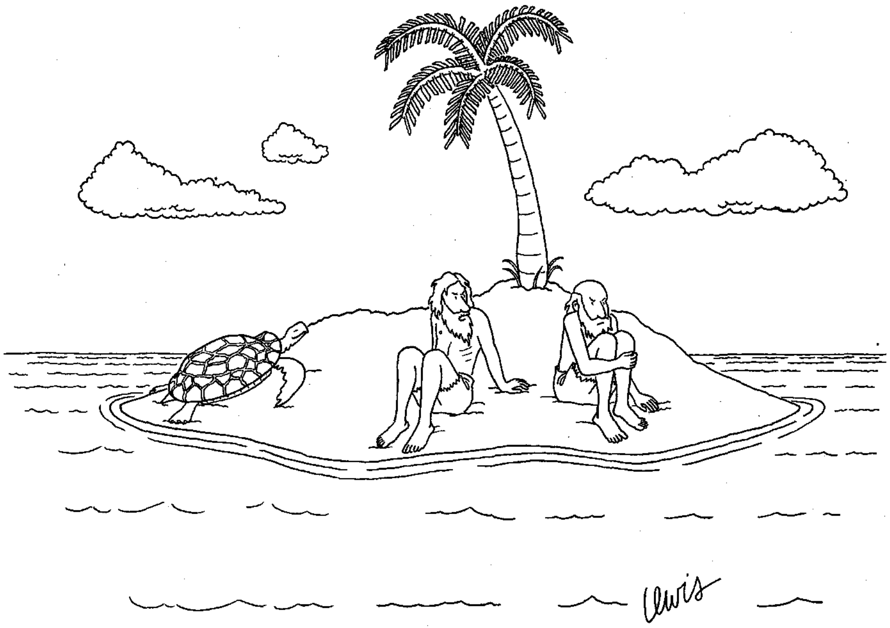


"I'm dating a turtle, Hank. If you've got a better cry for help, I'm all ears."

to pay how much to tear it down and who's going to go to court if someone sues for something that happens while it's being torn down—have kept the demolition stymied and the High Line up.

While this dispute was going on, a couple of neighborhood residents, Robert Hammond and Joshua David, noticed the High Line, without even knowing what it was, and thought that it might be worth saving as some kind of public space. They were surprised by how much support they received, and how many ideas—for parks and promenades—were brought forward. Fortunately for the High Line's friends, there exists an organization, called the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, that helps groups that want to take old railroad lines and turn them into "recreational" areas. There are already eleven thousand miles of such trails in the country, and the High Line would be eligible for conversion. Estimates—what are known among Chelsea Property Owners as "laughably conservative estimates"—put the cost of park conversion at around forty million dollars, which is not, by the standards of a city that spends a billion and a half dollars a year on environmental protection, really all that much money. Federal funds would act as seed money for public fund-raising.

For the moment, the High Line's friends would like to get, well, a C.I.T.U.—a Certificate of Interim Trail Use—from the S.T.B., which would save the line and let them start raising money. "We *want* the development of the area," Hammond says, "but the bottom line is that this runs through three changing neighborhoods—the meat-packing district and Chelsea and the lower edge of Hell's Kitchen—and it's a great piece of infrastructure. We just want to save it for *thoughtful* development. The one thing you can be sure of is that there will never be an opportunity to build again a mile-and-a-third-long parkway in the sky on the West Side. If we lose it, it's gone for good. We don't know what it might become, but we know that if it goes it's gone. The weird thing is that the High Line is just a structure, it's just metal in the air, but it becomes a site for everybody's fantasies and projections. People see rats and derelicts where there aren't any, or else, like Joel, who's a visionary, they see the city the way it ought to have been."

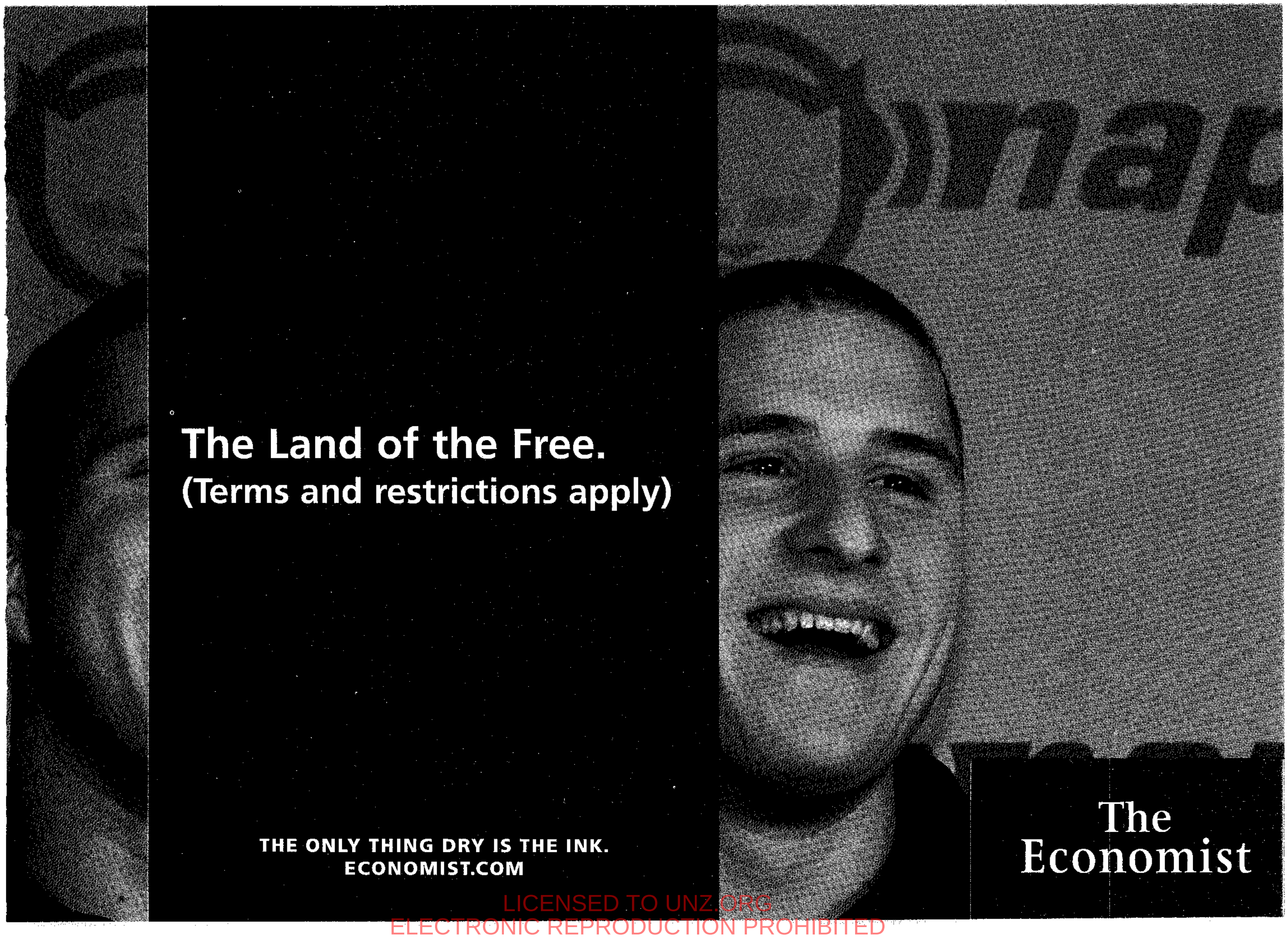
After the garden, the wood. A small stand—hey, a glade!—of ailanthus trees has grown up, a few hundred yards or so from the little garden, in the tight shadowed space by the Wolf Building. The wood is hard, and the trees are ten and twelve feet tall. Joel has a particular affection for this part of the High Line. "I just pray that, if they save the High Line, they'll save some of the virgin parts, so that people can have this kind of hallucinatory experience of nature in the city."

In the city below, you see: a junk yard rumbling and gabbling. It is an elephant's graveyard for computers and computer parts. Whole mainframes can be seen down in the yard, awaiting the blow of the lobster claw, returning them to the metal they came from. The junk yard, or "recycling center," is neatly divided—old pipe here, electronics parts there—and three huge machines, magnet, claw, and shovel, take turns doing their work. The railing on the High Line next to the yard is gone; Joel suspects that, in a hungry moment, the claw turned, rose, and gobbled it up.

Then you also see: the crowds of gallerygoers on Twenty-fourth and Twenty-second Streets, weaving in and out of Mary Boone and Matthew Marks. Although Twenty-fifth and Twenty-third Streets look the way streets on the far West Side have always looked—a low-slung melange of taxi garages and electrical-repair shops—Twenty-second and Twenty-fourth have been transformed, two fingers of SoHo probing into the depths of Chelsea. Antonio Homem, the dapper director of the Sonnabend gallery, nips down Twenty-second on his way back from lunch, sees visitors on the High Line above, and tips his hat. A sign hanging outside a night club reads, "Be Good to the Roxy and the Roxy Will Be Good to You."

The High Line can be traversed only to Sixteenth Street, and the old National Biscuit Company buildings, now Chelsea Market. A bank of grape hyacinths blossom in its shadow. A giant dot-com sign is painted on the side of a nearby building. Joel Sternfeld assembles his eight-by-ten camera and tries to frame a picture. Gesturing toward the sign, he says, "It's a choice: the Zeitgeist or the grape hyacinth." He turns his camera in the other direction, gets under his cloth, and frames a picture there. The light on two old tenements fills his frame, and so does the sexy sprawled Guess girl. He emerges from under his blanket and sighs. "It would make a good picture, a little overdetermined, but true enough: Do you put her in, or stay on the Path?"

The Friends of the High Line often say that they would like to see it become a *promenade plantée*, a long snaking viaduct with flowers, like the one, in Paris, that runs from the Bastille out to the Bois de Vincennes. The difference, evident to anyone who has walked both, is that the *promenade plantée* is a piece of Paris that happens to be above Paris—an elegant flowered walkway looking down on elegant flowered streets—while the High Line is a place where the discordant encounters of its city are briefly resolved. If it is saved, it may become in reality what the real-estate lawyers, of all improbably poetic people, have always known it was, an easement in the air. ♦



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A FEW MORE RULES

BY ANDY BOROWITZ

Ellen Fein, co-author of the "Rules" books that teach women how to snag men by playing hard to get, is getting a divorce. The announcement comes just three months before the release of the third book in the series . . . "The Rules III: Time-Tested Secrets for Making Your Marriage Work."
—*The Associated Press, March 27, 2001.*

Rule No. 1: Be Mysterious.

Publishers love mystery. Many authors forget this, and let the publisher of their marriage-advice books know that they are in the process of taking their husbands to the cleaners—and they wind up getting their book yanked from the spring list. It hurts to be dumped like that (none of us like rejection!), but it's so easy to avoid. It's just a matter of following *Rule No. 1.*

Remember, you want a publisher with whom you can share your work, thoughts, and feelings, but wait until your book has actually been shipped before you share your innermost secrets—for example, what those Hefty bags full of your husband's clothes were doing on your front lawn when your publisher happened to drive by on his way to the gym.

Rule No. 2: Write About Your Husband in the Present Tense.

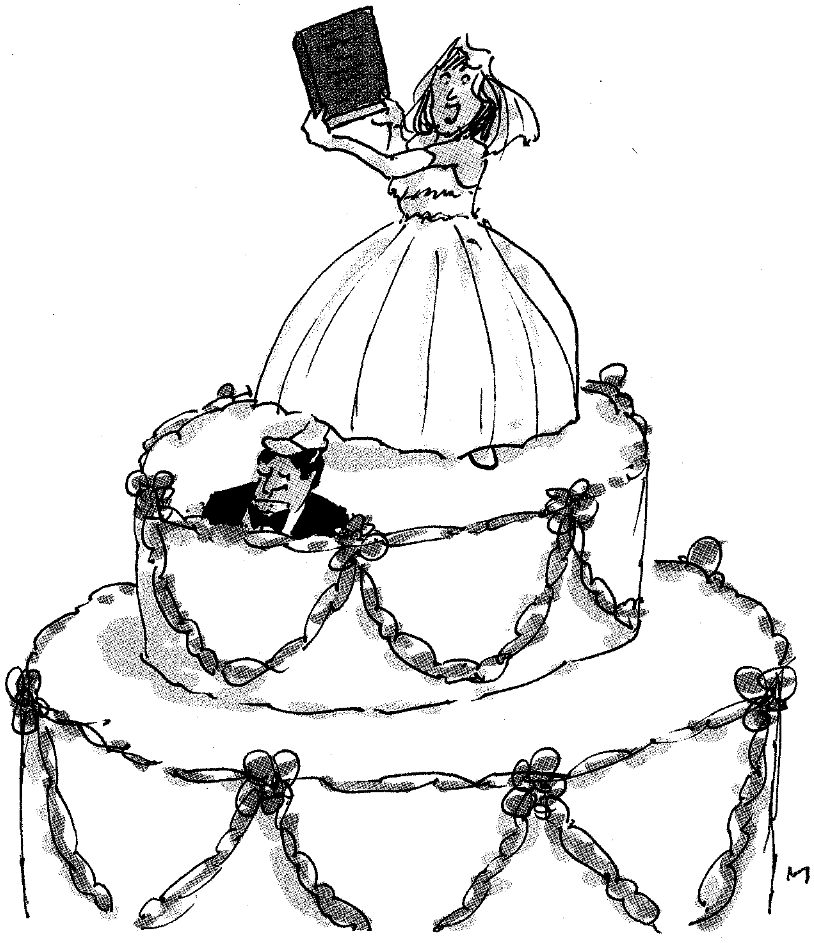
Nothing makes an author sound more like an authority on marriage than writing about her husband as if she were still on speaking terms with him. Simple as this *Rule* is, you'd be surprised how many authors forget to follow it.

This *Rule* goes hand in hand with another *Rule* (which we'll call *Rule No. 2a*): In your manuscript, always refer to your husband as "my best friend in the whole wide world" and not as "that no-account sleazebag who hit on my agent's slutty assistant at my last book party."

Rule No. 3: When Your Publisher Asks How Your Husband Is Doing, Hang Up the Phone.

A few months before your book comes out, your publisher may start anxiously calling you up to sniff out your true marital status. When he calls, don't stay on the phone for more than two minutes—buy a timer if you have to, and when the bell rings, *click.* By following this *Rule,* you increase the chances of your book's actually making it into the bookstores, rather than being pulped or converted into Sheetrock.

Foolproof conversation-enders include: "Whoops, 'Antiques Roadshow' is on," and "I'm in the middle of tarring my driveway," and "Yow! A wolverine is chewing on my leg." Remember to say these things in a very nice way.



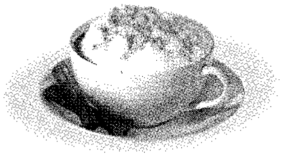
MICHAEL CRAWFORD

Rule No. 4: Tell Your Publisher That Your Husband Has Been Lost at Sea.

Your publication date is just weeks away, and your publisher is starting to get cold feet. That's natural. Publishing a mass-market book with an initial printing of more than a hundred thousand copies is a big commitment—and all publishers are afraid of commitment, especially when they're part of a debt-laden media conglomerate that's firing people right and left. It's understandable, then, that your publisher might corner you in the frozen-foods department at D'Agostino's and ask you, point blank, where, exactly, your husband is. If this happens, just follow *Rule No. 4,* and say that your husband has been lost at sea.

Your publisher may not believe you. He may get angry and irrational, and he may even start using words like "indemnification clause." Don't panic. Remember, you have *The Rules* on your side, and *The Rules* are very clear on this point: make sure the check for your advance has cleared, and leave the country at once. ♦

Keep pace.



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THE SPORTING SCENE

SWINGING IN MOROCCO

Golf diplomacy and the last North African kingdom.

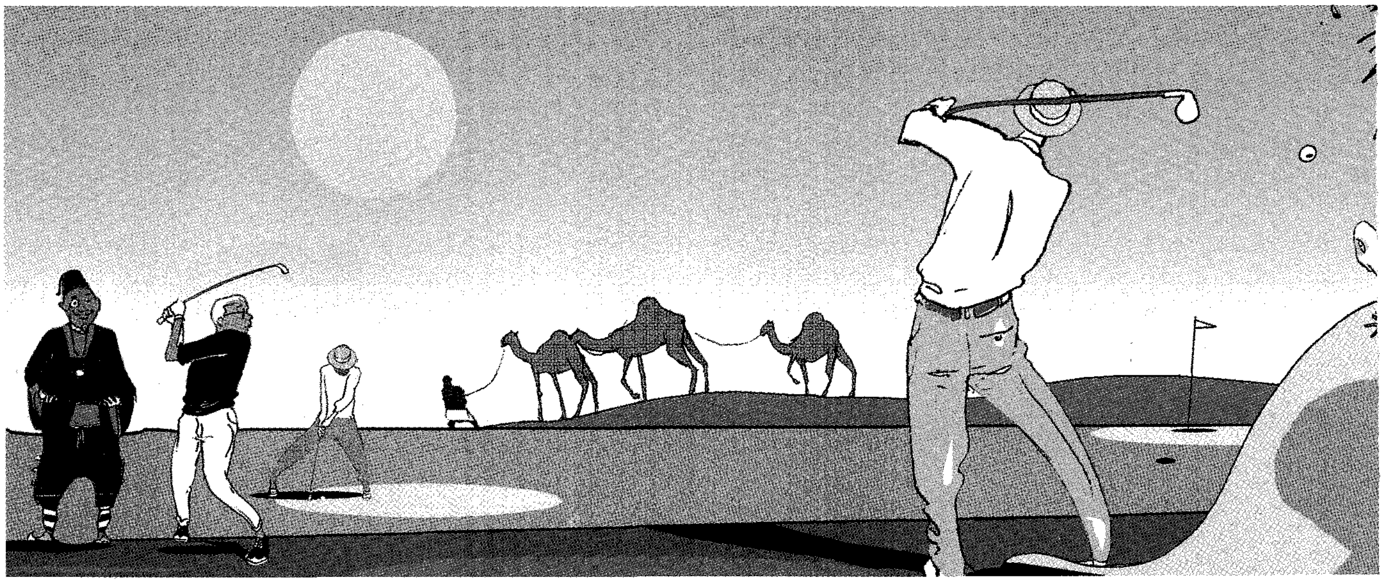
BY DAVID OWEN

If you write about golf for a living, certain ethically questionable opportunities arise from time to time, and among the more tantalizing ones are chances to play for free. In Orlando a couple of years ago, three golf writers I know (who were supposed to be covering a trade show) invited a veteran newspaperman to join them for a game at a new local course, which was trying to become better known. Something about the invitation aroused the suspicion of the newspaperman, and he asked the young writers if they had arranged for the golf club to "comp" them. They assured him that they were going to pay their own way, and the newspaperman replied that he would have to decline their invitation, on principle. "I've never paid for a round of golf in my life," he explained, "and I'm not going to start now."

With a similarly acute sense of professional probity, I spent ten days last November playing golf and whooping it up in Morocco as a guest of His Royal Highness Prince Moulay Rachid, who is the brother of King Mohammed VI, the country's thirty-seven-year-old leader. Along with approximately a dozen other sportswriters from the United States and elsewhere, I made the trip, all expenses paid, for the purpose of witnessing the twenty-ninth annual King Hassan II Golf Trophy, a tournament that was founded by—and is now dedicated to the memory of—Morocco's previous monarch, the current King's father, who died in 1999. Hassan II was a passionate golfer. He employed a squadron of caddies (one of whom was responsible for gripping the royal cigarette with a pair of tongs while the King swung his club), wore gloves on both hands (to prevent unwanted contact with the world beyond his person), and shot mediocre scores that could easily have been worse (because kings are not obliged to play from bad lies or extricate themselves from sand traps).

Also making the trip to the 2000 Trophy were about a hundred and forty wealthy American spectators, who paid roughly ten thousand dollars a couple. They spent most of their time playing golf with the pros and with Moroccan officials, ogling semi-naked Europeans lounging by the edges of azure swimming pools, eating and drinking to excess at black-tie banquets, and receiving a privileged introduction to an array of Moroccan attractions, some of which are viewable only with the consent of the King. When we needed to make an early tee time in Rabat, our very own commercial jet was provided; when we decamped in our fleet of buses, a motor escort led the way. For the King and his accountants, the special treatment was easy to justify. Tourism is one of Morocco's few major industries, and our trip's participants (almost all of whom seemed to be lawyers, dentists, retired dentists, or retired lawyers) were exactly the sort of visitors that cash-starved foreign travel destinations covet.

My trip was, in other words, a junket—a journalistic outing whose putative subject is also its financial sponsor. In this case, however, the host was not a golf course or a resort or a manufacturer of golf equipment (the most common sources of tempting golf-writer freebies) but a developing country whose place in the world has been influenced for decades by its unlikely relationship with the game of golf. Hassan II viewed golf not only as a palliative to the tedium of absolute power but also as a means of ingratiating his small country with the United States. His infatuation with this very Western game was also emblematic of a broader yearning: during his reign, Morocco applied for membership in the European Union, though without success, and it stood out among Arab countries as an unusu-



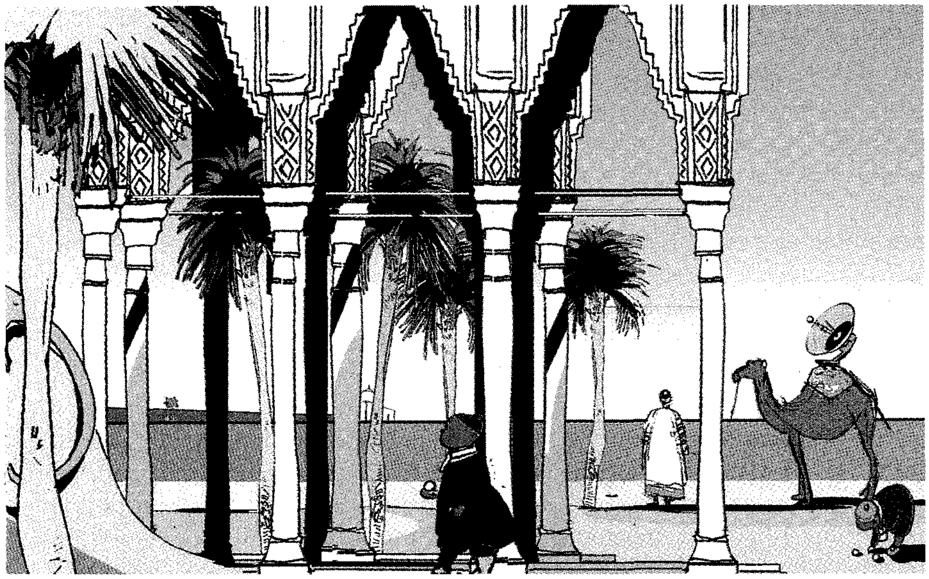
ISTVAN BANYAI

King Hassan II, the late father of Mohammed VI, was a golf nut who viewed the game not only as a palliative to the tedium of absol ally accommodating friend of the West.

That there might be even a tenuous link between statecraft, Third World development, and golf may seem far-fetched to non-golfers. But on the international stage the game can serve the same function that it (notoriously) does in the American business world, where the friendships that golfers forge during their four- or five-hour rounds end up influencing the course of capitalism. (Bill Gates and Warren Buffett are frequent golf partners.) The international business community is, to a great extent, a golf nation, and it is permeated by golf-based cultural values that transcend national divisions. In both Moroccan Arabic and Moroccan French, the words for bogey, birdie, fairway, and bunker are "bogey," "birdie," "fairway," and "bunker," although Mustafa, my regular caddie in Rabat, sometimes referred to the sand in the sand traps as "couscous." In Colonel Muammar el-Qaddafi's Libya—one of Morocco's North African neighbors—golf is, for all practical purposes, unknown.

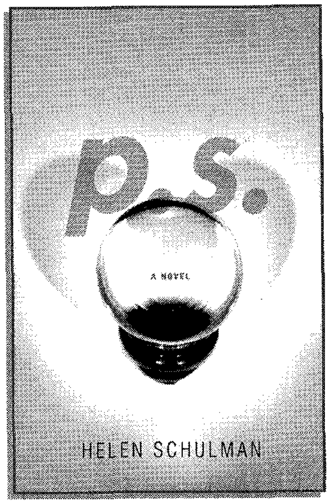
A quotation on the cover of my Morocco travel guide reads, "From the moment you land, adventure assails you." This curiously ominous accolade turned out to be true: my fellow-travellers and I, conspicuously American tourists in an impoverished country, were continually beset by hucksters who wished to sell us undesirable goods or services. We were all at our most vulnerable in the ancient marketplaces, where, for a few pennies, you could have your photograph taken with a large snake draped over your shoulders, and then, for a few dollars, have the snake (now slowly wrapping itself around your neck) removed.

My guidebook also informed me that the prices in the markets are highly negotiable, and that tourists should haggle aggressively. I dutifully bargained a little at one vender's stall—and bought my son a key chain attached to a chunk of plastic in which a scorpion had been embedded—but I hated the feeling that I was fighting over a trivial sum with a man who clearly needed every dirham he could lay his hands on. Suddenly, I had a conceptual breakthrough: instead of bargaining down, why not bargain up? I tried my idea first in a taxi, which I was sharing with two other sportswriters. When the driver told us that the fare was eighty dirhams (about seven dollars), I said, "No! A hundred!" He did a perfect cartoon double take, then looked at me with deep suspicion. I said, in halting French, "You are an excellent driver. Eighty is not enough. A hundred and ten!" He then not only laughed but also drove us all the way across a busy intersection in the middle of which he had previously seemed inclined to abandon us. A little later, in a mazelike souk, I reverse-haggled over the price of a leather purse for my daughter ("The work is so beautiful!" I said. "Your price is too low!") and ended up with a free second purse and an invitation to spend



wer but also as a means of ingratiating his country with the United States.

What would you do if you had a second chance at your first love?



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P.S.

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Victoria Roberts

"We're getting more vulgar with age, something I had not foreseen."

• •

Ramadan with the family of the shopkeeper (I think).

The enchantments of the marketplace notwithstanding, I, like many of the other men on the trip, spent most of my Moroccan quality time haunting various golf clubs. Building golf courses—along with visitor-friendly infrastructure to support them—became an important part of Hassan II's vision for the modernization of his country, and he built some beauts. The tournament is held in Rabat, the nation's capital, at the Dar es Salaam Royal Golf Club. (Dar es Salaam means "house of peace.") It consists of two terrific eighteen-hole courses and one short (but testing) nine-hole course, all of which were designed, in the early seventies, by the great American course architect Robert Trent Jones, Sr. The holes on all three courses are routed among eucalyptus trees and cork oaks, whose thick, resilient bark is harvested every decade or so. The cork oaks also shed bushels of thumb-size acorns, which are said to have pharmacological properties and are eagerly gathered and consumed by locals.

In Marrakech, where we spent two days, I played one round at the Marrakech Royal Golf Club, which was built in the twenties by the local pasha and is one of Morocco's oldest courses, and one round at the Amelkis Golf Club, which opened just a few years ago. Royal Marrakech has an appealingly down-at-the-heels, post-colonial feel. There is no clubhouse in the usual American sense; the tiny food-and-drink concession is squeezed into a dark nook the size of a storeroom and is staffed by squabbling old women in hooded robes. The fairways are tatty around the edges, and a number of them are flanked by colonnades of venerable-looking palm trees. Several of the holes offer stirring views of the High Atlas Mountains, just thirty or forty miles away, whose snowcapped peaks rise like the Rockies—but if it weren't for those mountains you could almost believe that you were playing golf in the nineteen-fifties on the outskirts of Havana. The course was a particular favorite of Hassan II's, and it is still frequented by members of his family. The day after I played there (with three prosperous Californians, who were among the trip's paying guests), Princess Lalla Meriem, one of the current King's three sisters, visited Royal Marrakech. Other players on the course—even German ones, who, in my experience, are among the rudest golfers in the world—stepped aside so that she could play through.

Amelkis, which is only a few minutes from Royal Marrakech by car, is entirely different. It is not a relic of a vanished era but a harbinger of a new one. Its clubhouse could be swapped for that of any first-class resort in Arizona, and its pro shop is every bit as thoroughly stocked with overpriced golf shirts. When American executives travel abroad, they tend to expect certain nonnegotiable amenities, among them drinking water that doesn't cause diarrhea, taxi-drivers who speak English, and decent golf. As a result, in recent years courses like Amelkis have been built all over the world—even in such truly unlikely locales as suburban Hanoi.

I played Amelkis with two other journalists and an official of the Royal Moroccan Golf Federation, Kamil El Kholti, who was born in France and now lives in Casablanca. Several modestly proportioned but sumptuous-looking houses—all built in the same distinctive Moorish style, and all finished in ochre stucco—were scattered along the edges of the course, and more were under construction. I asked El Kholti who owned the houses. "Europeans, mostly," he said. The flight from Madrid to Casablanca takes less than an hour, and jet-setters hop down for weekends. I pointed to a typical house and asked El Kholti how much it might sell for. "About four hundred thousand dollars," he guessed. That's not an unearthly sum as vacation real estate goes, but it equals a little more than three centuries' worth of Morocco's 1998 per-capita income. Behind a tall fence alongside one of the golf holes was a discreet new low-rise resort, the Amanjena, where the price of an overnight stay begins at about seven hundred dollars.

As in resort communities in the United States, the golf course at Amanjena provides the anchor for the entire development—like the great big Sears store at the far end of the mall. American golfers who travel abroad to play golf tend to travel mostly to Scotland and Ireland (the two prime destinations offered by all golf-tour companies), but they can sometimes be persuaded to visit other countries, as long as they are allowed to bring their clubs. Morocco currently attracts two and a half

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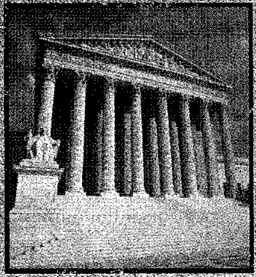

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million foreign visitors a year; King Mohammed's goal is to increase that figure to ten million over the next decade. Morocco has enough good golf courses throughout the country to pass itself off as a reasonable golf destination, even for discerning players. All it needs now is some better roads and airports, a few more first-rate hotels, and a little more shameless puffery from cosseted golf writers.

Morocco was ruled by France for roughly the first half of the twentieth century; it achieved independence, after an interval of domestic violence and turmoil, in 1956. Hassan II ascended to the Moroccan throne five years later, at the age of thirty-one, following the death of his father.

This entire period, whatever else it may have been, was a golden age for golf. The game's popularity was growing rapidly in the United States, in part because of the example set by Dwight D. Eisenhower, who was the most golf-obsessed American President ever. (There are spike marks on the floor of the Oval Office which are attributed to him; a bumper sticker during his reëlection campaign said "Ben Hogan for President. . . . If we're going to have a golfer, let's have a good one.") Ike's widely chronicled enthusiasm imbued golf, globally, with a sort of hokey Free World allure—as did the contemporaneous rise of Arnold Palmer, who was the game's first television star, and, a little later, the emergence of Jack Nicklaus, who turned pro the year of Hassan's coronation.

It was against this backdrop that the young, westward-looking Moroccan leader devoted himself to the game. Hassan was not a natural player, however, and by the mid-sixties he was looking for an American instructor to help him bring his scores down out of the triple digits. He settled on Claude Harmon, who had won the Masters in 1948 and was the head professional at Winged Foot Golf Club, in Mamaroneck. Harmon made numerous visits to Morocco in the late sixties and early seventies, in return for which the King gave him, among other things, jewelled daggers, rugs, swords, a cigar box stuffed with cash, and a Lincoln Continental Mark III. Harmon eventually moved his family to Rabat. His eldest son, Claude (Butch) Harmon, Jr.—who today is better known as the teacher of Tiger Woods—served as the head professional at Dar es Salaam in the early seventies.

One of the services that Harmon provided for his royal patron was the procurement of interesting golf partners. Chief among these was Billy Casper, who was one of Nicklaus's most nettlesome rivals throughout the sixties. Casper first visited Morocco in 1969, and he and the King hit it off. Casper returned to Morocco five times that year, and repeatedly thereafter. He helped create the King's tournament, which was first held in 1971 (and which Casper himself won twice, in 1972 and 1975), and he and his wife, Shirley, are still deeply involved in both the tournament and the accompanying tour, where their role falls somewhere between guests of honor and chaperons. In fact, it was Billy who attached the airline luggage tag to my golf bag at Kennedy Airport.

"I'm half Moroccan now," Billy told me one day in Marrakech, as we stood on some marble steps outside our hotel's dining room waiting to be overfed. "I feel that I have two homes—one in the United States and one in Morocco." The friendly feelings are mutual. At a black-tie feast for our group in downtown Rabat one night, Billy and Shirley were outfitted in Moroccan wedding clothes, and then were repeatedly carried in and out of the banquet hall on the shoulders of cheerfully grimacing young men in traditional attire.

During the tournament's formative years, Hassan II had concerns unrelated to golf. In 1971, his forty-second birthday party was crashed by more than a thousand rebellious soldiers; they killed nearly a hundred of the guests before the King, who had hidden in a bathroom during the worst of the shooting, effected a change of heart in one of the revolt's commanders by looking him in the eye and reciting the first verse of the Koran. (The rebel knelt and kissed his sovereign's hand.) The following year, the King's plane was attacked in the air by four F-5 fighters from his own Air Force. One of the jet's engines was destroyed, but it managed to land in Rabat—where the rebels continued to strafe it until the King grabbed his

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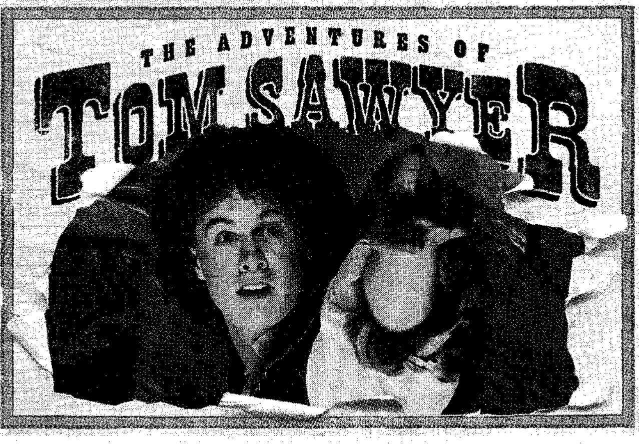

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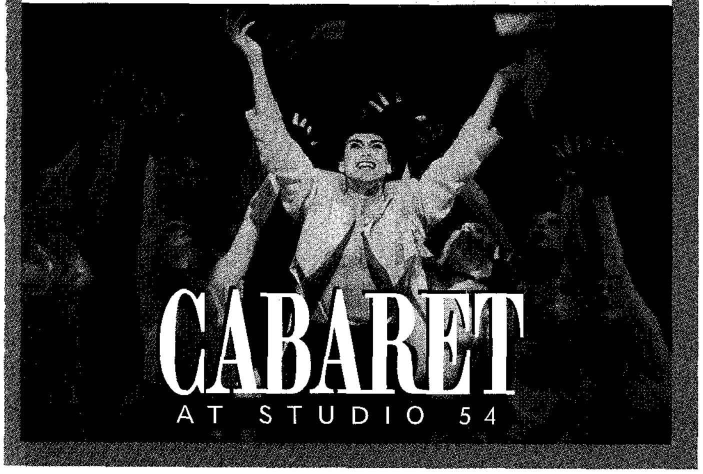
Cabaret

Roundabout's Tony Award®–winning reinvention of "Cabaret" has dazzled critics and audiences alike. "Sensational . . . absolutely mesmerizing!" raves *The New Yorker*. Now in its fourth glorious year, "Cabaret" is "still the best musical on Broadway!" says the *New York Post*. Now starring Matt McGrath as the Emcee and Gina Gershon as Sally Bowles. **Studio 54, 254 West 54th Street, 212-239-6200,** or visit **www.telecharge.com**.



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A behind-the-scenes story told through the never-before-heard songs of Ed Kleban, the talented lyricist to "A Chorus Line." The show musically dramatizes his struggle to make it in showbiz while juggling romances and friendships. *Time Out New York* calls " 'A Class Act' . . . a pure-hearted show that trusts in the timeless value of a story and a song." **Ambassador Theatre, 219 West 49th Street, 212-239-6200,** or visit **www.aclassactonbway.com**.

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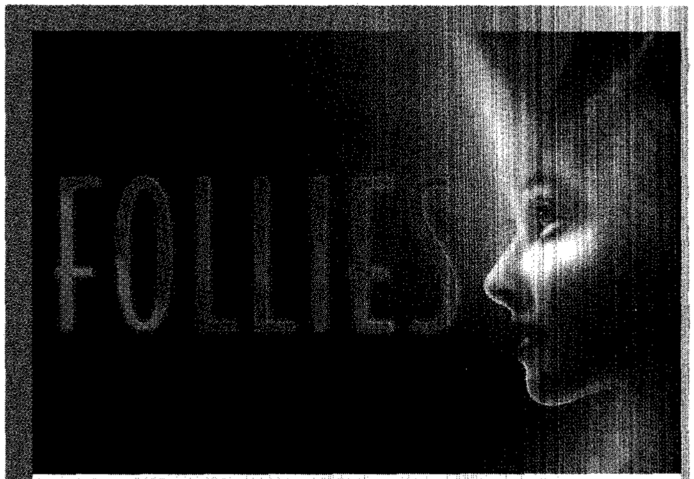
THEATRE

PHOTO: CAROL ROSEGG

The Dinner Party

Neil Simon's back on Broadway with his funniest, most loved smash hit in years. Starring Henry Winkler and John Ritter. The *New York Post* calls it "hilarious! 'The Dinner Party' is one invitation you'll be glad you accepted." WUPN-9 TV says it's "a deliciously provocative buffet of marital pleasure and pain." *The Washington Post* writes "it's laugh-out-loud funny. Neil Simon's emotionally richest play." **Music Box Theatre, 239 West 45th Street, 212-239-6200**, or visit **www.telecharge.com.**



Follies

" 'Follies' is one of our finest musicals. It should be on everyone's top-ten list!" raves *New York* magazine. Featured in this James Goldman/Stephen Sondheim musical are Blythe Danner, Gregory Harrison, Judith Ivey, and Treat Williams, joined by legendary stars Polly Bergen, Marge Champion, Betty Garrett, Joan Roberts, Donald Saddler, Jane White, Carol Woods, and Louis Zorich. **Belasco Theatre, 111 West 44th Street, 212-239-6200**, or visit **www.telecharge.com.**

The Full Monty

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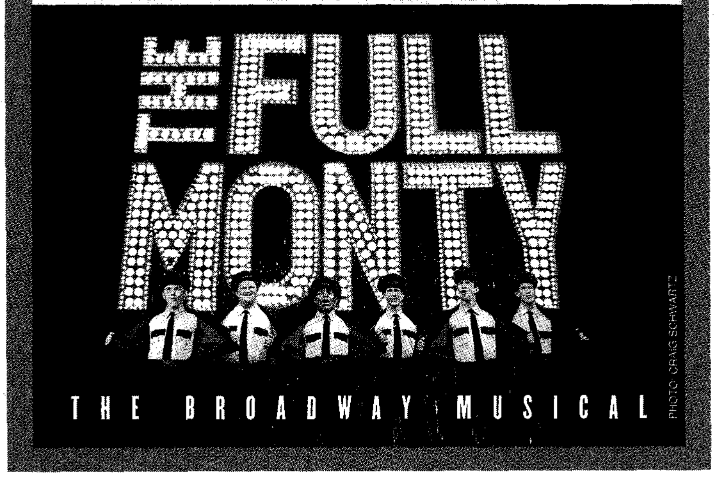

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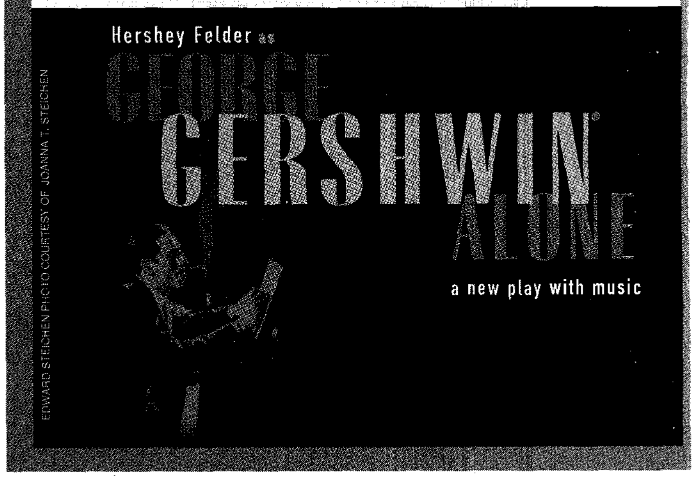
George Gershwin returns home to Broadway in "George Gershwin® Alone," the new play with music starring Hershey Felder that brings the music, muse, and mystery of America's legendary composer to life. After a year of sold-out engagements, a special limited engagement is now on Broadway through July 22nd. "'S Wonderful!" **Helen Hayes Theatre, 240 West 44th Street, 212-239-6200**, or visit **www.GeorgeGershwinAlone.com**.



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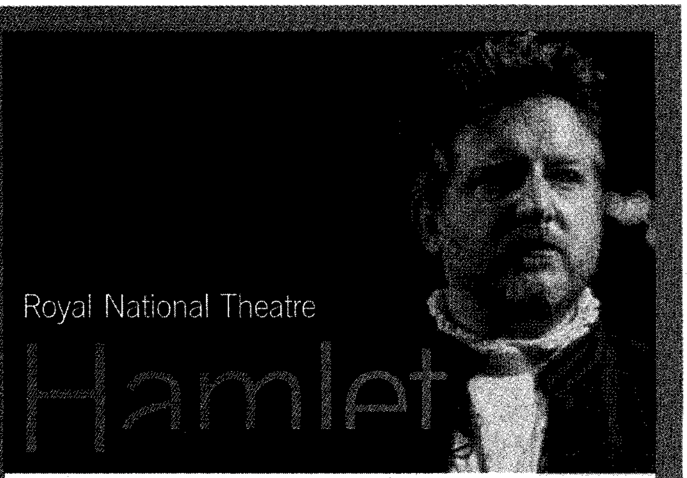

Hamlet at BAM

"Confirming [Olivier Award–winner] Simon Russell Beale's position as one of the foremost actors of his generation" (*The Observer*, UK), his portrayal of this "first-rate, deeply intellectual Hamlet . . . is everything one could hope for: witty, ironic, intelligent" (*The Guardian*, UK). This highly imaginative staging has been hailed as one of the great Shakespearean interpretations of our time. Five performances only May 30th through June 2nd. **Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Avenue, 718-636-4100**, or visit **www.bam.org**.

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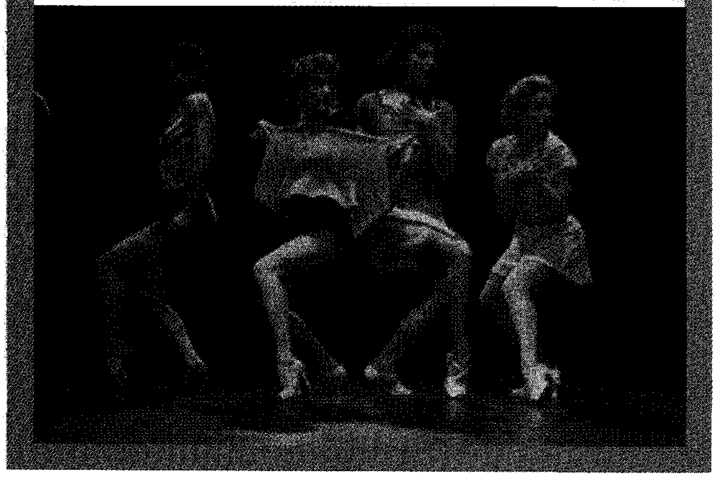
THEATRE

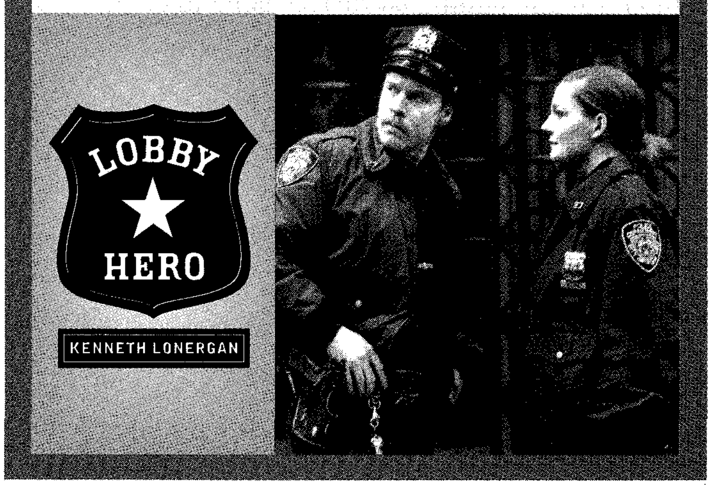
Kiss Me, Kate

Broadway's biggest winner—with five Tony Awards®, including Best Musical Revival—is now in its second smash year at the Martin Beck Theatre, where the *New York Post's* Clive Barnes says it is "triumphantly installed, possibly for life!" *The New York Times* calls it "irresistible, like one long ear-to-ear grin," and WCBS-TV cheers: "Kate is musical comedy paradise! Bliss, sheer bliss!" **Martin Beck Theatre, 302 West 45th Street, 212-239-6200**, or visit **www.kissmekateonbroadway.com**.



Lobby Hero

Kenneth Lonergan, author and director of the Oscar-nominated film "You Can Count on Me," has returned to the stage with "Lobby Hero." *Time Out* raves, "Pull strings, track down scalpers, bribe a producer—do whatever you can to get a ticket to this masterpiece." **John Houseman Theatre, 450 West 42nd Street, 212-239-6200**, or visit **www.telecharge.com.**



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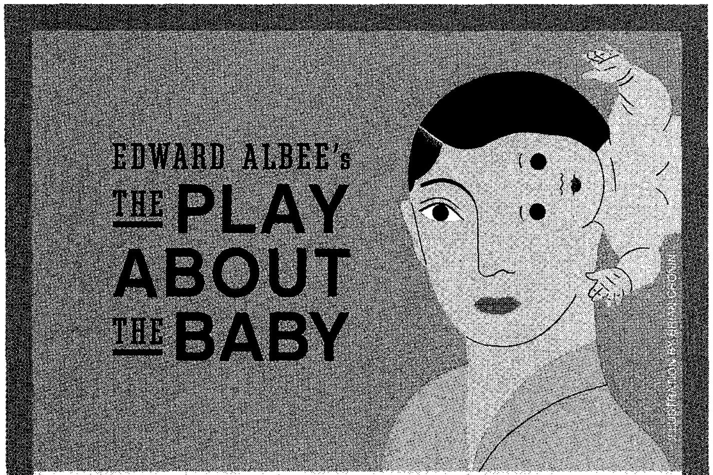
EDWARD ALBEE's
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The Play About the Baby

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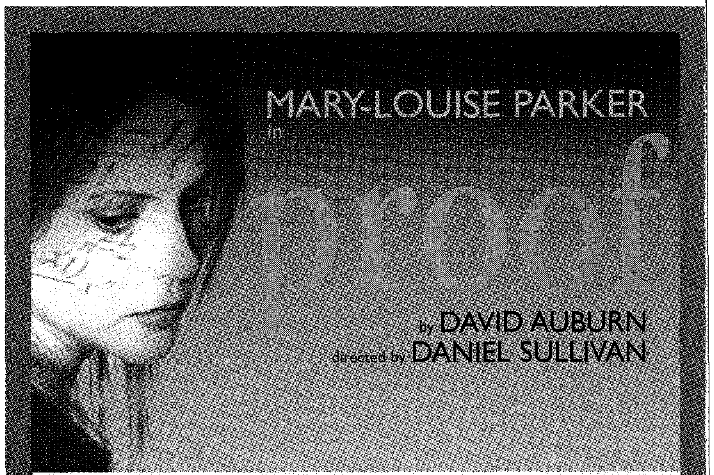

Proof

Don't miss the play and performance of the year—Mary-Louise Parker in "Proof." Winner of the 2001 Pulitzer Prize for Drama, "Proof" is "exhilarating" (*The New York Times*). "Mary-Louise Parker is magnificent!" raves the *New York Post*. "Run and get your tickets immediately!" says John Simon in *New York* magazine. **Walter Kerr Theatre, 219 West 48th Street, 212-239-6200**, or visit **www.proofonbroadway.com**.

THEATRE

Stones in His Pockets

After taking London's West End by storm winning Olivier Awards for best actor and best comedy, "Stones in His Pockets" has come to Broadway. *Newsday* calls it "delightful and downright dazzling! This sleeper London smash has become a certifiable phenomenon!" The *New York Post* cheers, "The gorgeous comic acting of Sean Campion and Conleth Hill makes for an evening of sheer, rarified fun!" **Golden Theatre, 252 West 45th Street, 212-239-6200**, or visit **www.telecharge.com**.

PHOTO BY NOBBY CLARK

The Tale of the Allergist's Wife

"The Tale of the Allergist's Wife" is the story of a woman whose relentless pursuit of New York culture merely serves to distract her from her nervous breakdown. *The New York Times* raves, "Uproarious! 'The Allergist's Wife' earns its wall-to-wall laughs." **Ethel Barrymore Theatre, 243 West 47th Street, 212-239-6200**, or visit **www.allergistswife.com**.

PHOTO BY JOAN MARCUS

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plane's radio and shouted, "Stop firing! The tyrant is dead!" Both of these incidents were followed by the inevitable bureaucratic reshufflings and summary executions. Then the King went back to working on his game.

One journalist summarized Hassan II's legacy, shortly after his death, as "economic backwardness, rising demographic pressures, widespread corruption, vast and open disparities of income, urban overpopulation, rural decay, illiteracy, inadequate public services, underutilization of resources and environmental destruction." Nevertheless, Hassan II did maintain relative tranquillity for thirty-eight years in an ethnically diverse country, which is the only surviving monarchy in North Africa. And although he may have made little progress toward solving his own country's considerable problems, he remained remarkably friendly to the West.

Does golf deserve some of the credit? In a brief essay published in the *Times Magazine* last year, David Plotz, who is the Washington bureau chief of *Slate*, hypothesized that golf is the reason that some countries enjoy peace while others fight wars. Plotz was partly being funny, and partly not. "Countries where golf is popular," he wrote, "never fight other golfing nations—and don't fight much at all—while countries without golf are strikingly belligerent." The United States is one of a tiny handful of golf-loving countries that engage in wars of any kind, but our nation, Plotz noted, has dispatched troops only against tyrannical non-golfers like Saddam Hussein and Slobodan Milosevic.

Perhaps golf is a metaphorical substitute for war, and maybe even, in men, a hormonal one, since both activities involve the purchase of expensive equipment, the psyching out of opponents, and the launching of airborne projectiles. (Golfers "shoot" scores; I own, and occasionally consult, an instruction book called "Combat Golf.") A possibly more plausible reason is that golf is a deeply bourgeois pursuit, and, therefore, it tends to have a moderating effect on reckless behavior. A country in which golf is popular is a country that has outgrown any ideology-based lust for the smell of gunpowder, and has embraced the comfortable and decidedly non-revolutionary serenity of middle age. You can try to engineer the worldwide spread of Islamic fundamentalism or you can try to get rid of your slice—life is too short for both.

The Hassan II Golf Trophy, to be perfectly frank, isn't much of a golf tournament. The competitors participate only because they are given generous appearance fees and free vacations, and the reporters would pay no attention if the trip weren't famous in journalistic circles as the worldwide jubilee of sportswriter freeloading. In 2000, furthermore, the professional field was noticeably skimpy, because the Trophy coincided with important golf tournaments in the United States and Europe, and the world's big-name pros were therefore unavailable. The participants included just three genuinely well-known players, all of them from the Senior P.G.A. Tour: Casper, Hale Irwin, and Bruce Fleisher. There were also a few semi-obscure guys from the P.G.A. Tour (David Sutherland, Joe Ogilvie, and Shaun Micheel); half a dozen mostly unknown guys from the Buy.com Tour, which is American golf's equivalent of the minor leagues; plus a scattering of nobodies from Europe and Morocco.

But the lack of big names actually turned out to be a good thing. Most of the Buy.com players—whose names you would fail to recognize in an instant—had been knocking around the edges of the P.G.A. Tour for years, and were therefore too humbled to be prima donnas. They caroused with everyone else on the flight over, hung out in bars with the sportswriters till all hours, told funny stories, demonstrated card tricks, boycotted the practice tee, and were generally lots of fun to be with. (Each of them was playing for a guarantee, against winnings, of about ten thousand dollars: roughly a half of a per cent of the fee

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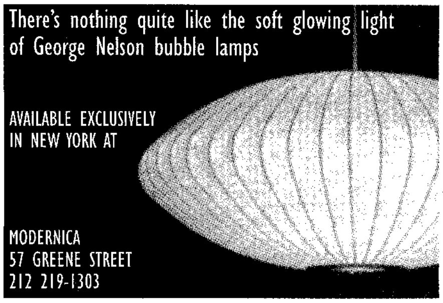
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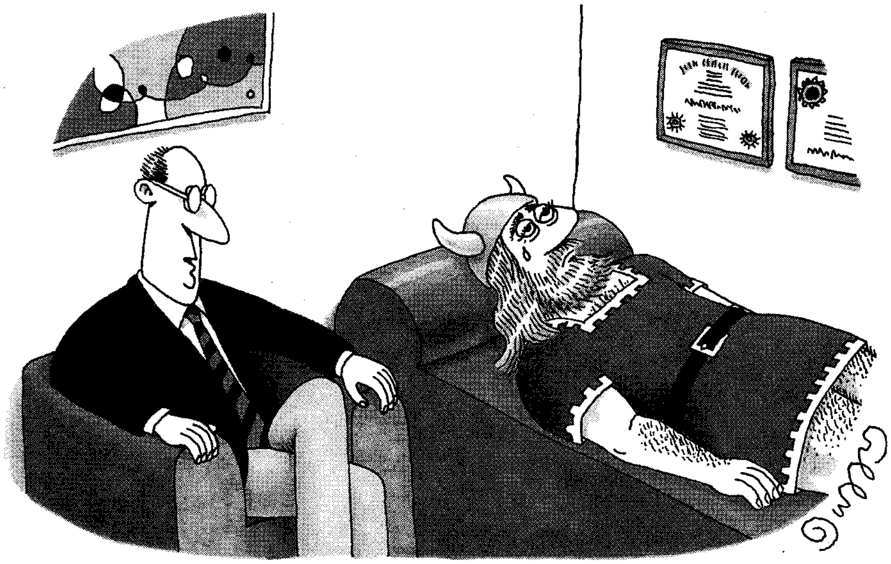

"It's time to stop blaming everything on the Tartars, Mr. Ragner."

• •

that reportedly would have been required to secure an abbreviated appearance by Tiger Woods.)

And, even without superstars, the tournament was fun to watch, especially for sportswriters. At big golf tournaments nowadays, most reporters spend little or no time actually observing the competition firsthand; instead, they stay inside the press tent and watch it on TV. This is not simply indolence: to actually go out on the course at a tournament would be to risk missing a crucial shot witnessed by every golf fan watching in a living room at home. At the Masters, where the press tent is actually a permanent building equipped with networked laptop computers, an instantaneous scoring system, and Krispy Kreme doughnuts, reporters don't even need to leave their seats. They can use headphones to listen to player interviews occurring elsewhere in the building, and they don't need to take notes, because printed transcripts are provided moments after the interviews end. At the 1995 U.S. Open, which was played at Shinnecock Hills Golf Club, on Long Island, a rumor circulated among reporters that a distinguished older sportswriter had contracted Lyme disease. "The only way he could have gotten Lyme disease," another sportswriter said, "is if you can catch it from limes."

At the Hassan II Trophy, though, the reporters had no choice but to go outdoors, because they couldn't watch the tournament on TV. There was a certain amount of television equipment on the course, but I was never convinced that the cables were connected to anything, and the press tent was video-free. Best of all, most of the course was not roped off: you could walk right on the fairways with the players—an impossibility on the P.G.A. Tour. There was a women's tournament going on at the same time, the Cup of H.R.H. Princess Lalla Meriem, and I spent a couple of hours on the last day following Patricia Meunier Lebouc, a French pro with whom I had played two days before (in a side competition for the sportswriters called the Media Cup). Lebouc is one of the best young players in Europe, and she was a member of the victorious European team in 2000 in the Solheim Cup, which is the women's equivalent of the Ryder Cup. At first, I followed her from a distance, because I didn't want to bother her or Amaia Arruti, a Spanish professional who was playing with her. But Lebouc spotted me and waved me over, and from then on I walked right down the middle of the fairway with them, chatting between shots. You can't do that at home.

I watched some of the men's tournament, too. The men attracted bigger galleries than the women did, although the number of spectators was still tiny by P.G.A. Tour standards. And the fans weren't always absolutely clear about what was expected of them. Small children occasionally had to be chased off a green so that a player could make an approach shot. Some spectators became so absorbed in gathering and eating cork-oak acorns that they had to be hollered at. And a few picnicking fans decided to treat the balls of the competitors as pocketable souvenirs. For the most part, though, the audience paid a reasonable amount of attention to the golf. When the final group had putted out on the final green, a large throng of Moroccan spectators gave a loud ovation to the winner, whose name I seem to have forgotten.

That night—our next to last in Morocco—King Mohammed threw a big black-tie banquet for the entire tour group in the ballroom at our hotel. One of the advantages of being a king is that you can throw a big black-tie banquet without attending it, and that's what he did. He also hadn't attended the tournament's official awards ceremony, which had been held that afternoon in a pavilion set up on Dar es Salaam's driving range. According to a story drifting among the sportswriters, the King, when invited to preside at the ceremony, had replied, "God does not hand out awards." That story was made considerably less plausible by the fact that he had handed out the awards the year before—although, admittedly, he was still just a prince then. In any case, Princess Lalla Meriem did the honors instead. (Prince Moulay Rachid, the biggest golf nut in the family, was tied up in Qatar, where he was representing Morocco at the ninth Islamic Summit Conference.)

At the banquet, the after-dinner speakers included Michael Gustin, a Texan, who first took part in the Hassan II Trophy tour in 1998. Gustin gave out the long-drive prizes (cash for the pros, golf clubs for the amateurs) and made a few convivial remarks. He is the president of a private exploration company, called Lone Star Energy, which a few months earlier had done something that no one had done in Morocco for more than twenty years: discovered a major oil field. Gustin's interest in Moroccan energy exploration actually long predated his participation in the Trophy tour—he made his first contacts with the Moroccan state-owned oil company back in the eighties—but he is a perfect example of the kind of American friend that Hassan II hoped to cultivate through golf. Gustin now lives in Rabat, and is an active member at Dar es Salaam, where his typical playing partners include other expatriates, Moroccan business executives, and government officials. "It's the same thing here as it is in America," he told me later. "If you really want to sit down and discuss something and cut a deal with somebody here, in the energy business especially, you do it on a Saturday or a Sunday with a round of golf. They love that."

Lone Star Energy's find—facilitated by recent changes (lobbied for by Gustin and others) in Moroccan law which increase the profits for independent energy-exploration companies—could transform the Moroccan economy. The country currently imports more than a billion dollars' worth of crude oil a year. Gustin's oil field contains a year's worth of oil, which may mean that the basin has the potential to meet Morocco's energy needs for decades to come. King Mohammed has promised that profits from the sale of oil and gas will be used to modernize agriculture and to improve social services, especially in the country's rural regions, which could definitely use the investment.

Gustin is optimistic about Morocco's future, and he thinks that the new King represents a big improvement over his father. "He is a very compassionate King," he told me. "He's the people's King, and he is very, very smart—a tremendously quick study. We couldn't ask for better coöperation than we're getting, and, hell, it's just been a pleasure knowing him and working with him. He's in a transition right now, and knows he needs to get into the game."

A single dark cloud looms on the horizon: the young King plays golf only rarely, and without enthusiasm. His recreational activity of choice is said to be jet-skiing. ♦

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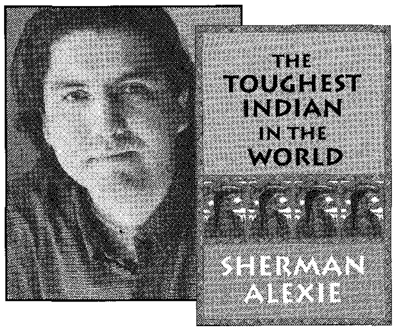

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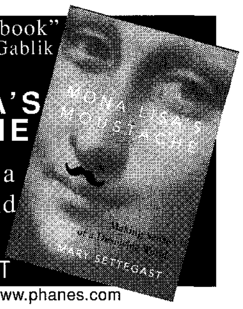

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A REPORTER AT LARGE

BAD COPS

Rafael Perez's testimony on police misconduct ignited the biggest scandal in the history of the L.A.P.D. Is it the real story?

BY PETER J. BOYER

On September 8, 1999, a thirty-two-year-old Los Angeles police officer named Rafael Perez, who had been caught stealing a million dollars' worth of cocaine from police evidence-storage facilities, signed a plea bargain in which he promised to help uncover corruption within the Los Angeles Police Department. Perez hinted at a scandal that could involve perhaps five other officers, including a sergeant. Later, Perez began to talk about a different magnitude of corruption—wrongdoing that he claimed was endemic to special police units such as the one on which he worked, combatting gangs in the city's dangerous Rampart district. Perez declared that bogus arrests, perjured testimony, and the planting of "drop guns" on unarmed civilians were commonplace. Perez's story unfolded over a period of months, and ignited what came to be known as the Rampart scandal, which the Los Angeles *Times* called "the worst corruption scandal in L.A.P.D. history."

Eventually, Perez implicated about seventy officers in wrongdoing, and the questions he raised about police procedure cast the city's criminal-justice system into a state of tumult. More than a hundred convictions were thrown out, and thousands more are still being investigated. The city attorney's office estimated the potential cost of settling civil suits touched off by the Rampart scandal at a hundred and twenty-five million dollars. A city councilman, Joel Wachs, said that it "may well be the worst man-made disaster this city has ever faced." The Rampart scandal finally broke the L.A.P.D. in a way that even the Rodney King beating, in 1991, and its bloody aftermath had not, forcing the city to accept a federal role in overseeing the police department's operation. Yet in the view of the lead investigator, Detective Brian Tyndall, members of the task-force team investigating Rampart have come to believe that Rafael Perez is not just a rogue cop who had decided to come clean but a brilliant manipulator who may have misdirected their inquiry. "He's a convict," Tyndall says. "He's a perjurer. He's a dope dealer. So we don't believe a word he says."

I—"HE'S GOT A GUN!"

One of the early signals of coming trouble for the L.A.P.D. arose from the palm-lined boulevards below Universal Studios, where an officer named Frank Lyga worked undercover narcotics in the Hollywood division. Lyga became the central figure in an episode that exposed deep ruptures within the L.A.P.D., and within the city it polices—dynamics that would, in large measure, define and propel the developing Rampart scandal.

In 1986, when Lyga joined the department, he was already an old-timer, a twenty-nine-year-old transplant from an Adirondack valley that his family had farmed for generations. He'd been on a local sheriff's force upstate, but he hated the cold, and he believed what he'd heard about the L.A.P.D. "It was professional . . . the best police department in the world," he says now. "I'm used to the East Coast police—not to knock the East Coast . . . a big fat cop sitting in a car eating doughnuts, drinking coffee. They couldn't get their gun out if their life depended on it."

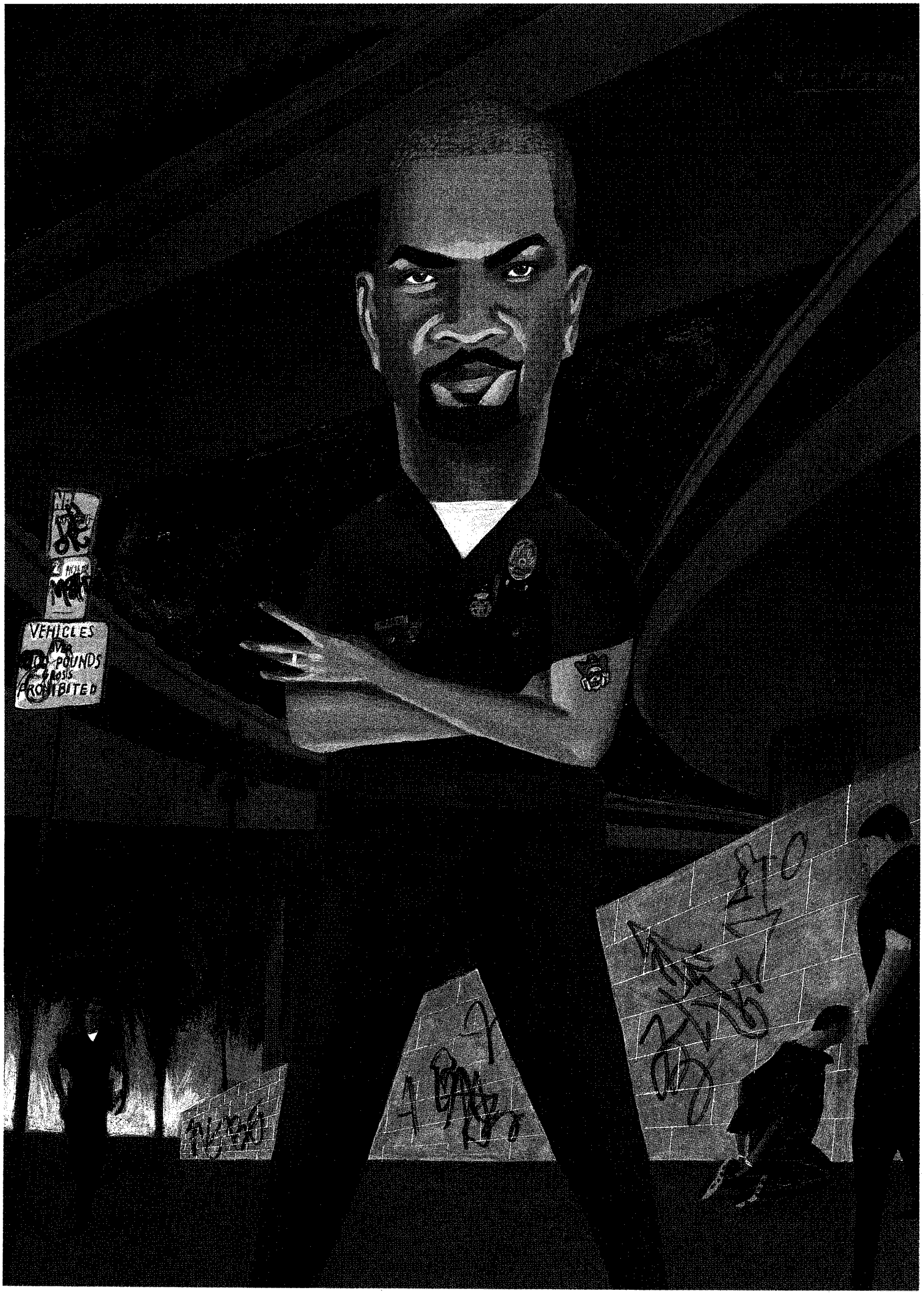
Lyga embraced the ethos of the L.A. street cop, a breed distinguished not so much by race, or even by gender, as by distinctness from the "insiders," or "bun boys"—officers who make their way to command positions through desk jobs and adjutancy. Street cops haven't necessarily read the police novels of Joseph Wambaugh, but they've seen the movies, and they believe that in "The New Centurions" Wambaugh got it just about right. Officers of the L.A.P.D. may become cynics, depressives, drunks, or bad husbands, but they believe that they form the outer membrane of civilization, and that chaos lies just the other side of the "thin blue line"—a term, as it happens, that was coined by the towering William H. Parker, an Eisenhower-era police chief whose distant memory is still revered.

The street cops' language is something like the voice of arrested adolescence. The suspects they engage ("jam") are "knuckleheads" and "assholes," and their encounters are "capers." They refer to themselves as "coppers." Frank Lyga's description of a good day at work is "rockin' and rollin', putting people in jail."

For Lyga, March 18, 1997, was not a good day at work. He and other members of his team were staking out a suspected methamphetamine dealer, and Lyga was the point man, which meant sitting in his unmarked 1991 Buick Regal and waiting for a drug deal to happen, so that he could follow the suspects back to their source. He'd sat there for three hours trying to look like an inconspicuous badass—with a Fu Manchu mustache and a ponytail, and dressed in jeans, a tank top, and a baseball cap adorned with a marijuana-leaf logo—when the deal was called off and the team agreed to reconvene at the Hollywood station.

Lyga pulled his car onto Ventura Boulevard. While he was stopped at a red light, he heard the thumping beat of rap music at high volume emanating from a green S.U.V. that had pulled up next to him. Lyga says he glanced at the driver, a black man with a shaved head. The driver stared back. When Lyga rolled down his window and asked, "Can I help you?," the man made a menacing gesture and said, according to Lyga,

ILLUSTRATIONS BY MARK ULRIKSEN


VEHICLES
OVER
POUNDS
GROSS
PROHIBITED

One of the crimes investigators hoped Perez would solve involved a gangsta cop. They were unprepared for what he did tell them.

"Ain't nobody looking at you, punk." Lyga, who prided himself on his Aryan Brotherhood cover—"All I lacked was the lightning bolts on my neck"—was surprised by the confrontation. He assumed that the other driver was a gang member, especially when, he says, the driver of the S.U.V. shouted, "Punk, I'll put a cap in your ass."

"He was a stone gangster," Lyga recalls. "In my opinion, in my training experience, this guy had 'I'm a gang member' written all over him. He had a shaved head, he had a goatee, wearing a nylon jumpsuit, driving a sport-utility vehicle." Lyga mentioned the "hand motions" the man had given him.

Lyga says he accepted a challenge from the other driver, suggesting that they pull over and have it out it right there. The driver of the S.U.V. did pull over, but Lyga bolted into traffic and drove off, chuckling as he glanced at his infuriated adversary in the rearview mirror. "I'm thinking, What an idiot, thinking I'm going to stop," Lyga recalls. "And I'm laughing, and I'm watching him in the mirror and he looked like he was going to rip the steering wheel off."

But the other driver pulled back into traffic, and a slow-motion chase ensued, with the S.U.V. edging through heavy traffic until it neared Lyga's car. Hoping that his partners were just a few blocks behind, Lyga radioed for help: "Hey, I got a problem. I've got a black guy in a green Jeep coming up here! He may have a gun."

Soon, Lyga was at another stoplight, and the S.U.V. started to pull up beside him on the left. Lyga swore, then unfastened his seat belt, anticipating a street fight. He again called for help—using a hidden radio microphone, activated by a foot pedal—and took out his gun, placing it on his lap facing the S.U.V. Lyga could plainly see the other driver now, and saw his arm extend across the passenger seat toward Lyga's car, his hand clutching what looked to Lyga like a steel-cased .45-calibre handgun. Lyga leaned forward, out of the line of fire, and radioed again: "He's got a gun!"

Lyga says he again heard "I'll cap you," then he raised his weapon, a 9-millimetre Beretta, and fired into the S.U.V., missing the driver. Two seconds later, Lyga fired again, and this time, he says, "I almost could hear the impact, the thud of the round hitting him, and I definitely saw it in his face." The S.U.V. wheeled away in a U-turn, then rolled into a gas station, and stopped. Lyga radioed a last transmission: "I just shot this guy! I need help! Get up here!"

Lyga pulled into the gas station and, holding his badge in his hand, yelled to a customer coming out of the station's minimart to call 911. Soon, a California Highway Patrol unit arrived, followed by Lyga's boss and the others on his stakeout team. Lyga had been right about his second shot—the bullet had struck the driver on his right side, puncturing his heart before stopping in his lung. Lyga had been right about the gun, too; the highway patrolmen found a stainless-steel 9-millimetre pistol on the floorboard of the S.U.V.

The other officers, following standard procedure, took control of the scene. A few minutes later, one of Lyga's partners approached him, and Lyga asked, "Is he dead?"

"Oh, yeah," his partner replied, "he's dead."

Good, Lyga thought. In eleven years on the force, he'd fired only two rounds, and had never before hit anybody; he was a brawler, not a shooter. But he figured that the guy in the S.U.V. had left him no choice.

Lyga returned to the station and awaited instruction—there would be paperwork, and investigators would want a reënactment of the shooting. A little over two hours later, Lyga's boss, Dennis Zeuner, told him about the man he'd shot, whose name was Kevin Gaines. "The guy was a policeman," Zeuner said. "One of ours."

The next day, Lyga found media trucks parked near his home, in Ventura County. A group of African-Americans, led by Gaines's former partner, Derwin Henderson, showed up at the scene of the incident and began conducting an unofficial investigation. It was a provocative move, challenging the L.A.P.D.'s fairness in dealing with racial incidents—which is what the Lyga-Gaines shooting had now become.

Three days after the shooting, Johnnie Cochran, Jr., stepped into the case, having been hired by Gaines's family to investigate a potential claim against Lyga and the city. Cochran's first act was to commission a private autopsy of Gaines's body, which revealed, a Cochran aide suggested, that there might be problems with the official version of Gaines's death.

Headquarters instructed that Lyga's "package" be pulled, meaning that the records of his job performance were being examined. On Lyga's second day back on the job, he was assigned to a desk by the narcotics-division commander, and was told that he had a bad package—some forty use-of-force inci-

"Don't get your hopes up, Buster."

dents. The department, in one attempt at reform, had defined "use of force" to include, in some situations, even the use of a "firm grip" to apprehend a suspect; in eleven years, Lyga had arrested many drug suspects who required more than a firm grip. Of those use-of-force incidents, however, four had prompted complaints of unnecessary force, but in each case Lyga was exonerated or the charges were classified as "unfounded" or "not resolved." Now, however, every use-of-force incident was examined demographically, and tested for signs of racial bias. No apparent indications were found.

A week after the shooting, Kevin Gaines was buried, and his funeral was itself the cause of discord. The biggest association of black officers, the Oscar Joel Bryant Foundation (named after a policeman killed in 1968), requested an official police funeral with full honors, a ceremony reserved for policemen killed in the line of duty. The demand posed a dilemma for the chief, Willie Williams, a black outsider who had been brought in from Philadelphia to head the L.A.P.D. in 1992, after the Rodney King riots. If Lyga's account was accurate, Kevin Gaines had brandished a weapon at someone he thought was a civilian motorist, and he hardly warranted an honors funeral. On the other hand, the black officers were an important constituency for the besieged Williams, who was widely disliked by the L.A.P.D.'s Old Guard. In the end, Gaines received a semi-official police funeral, attended by both Williams and Deputy Chief Bernard Parks.

Two months later, Cochran filed a twenty-five-million-dollar claim against the city, charging that Lyga was "an aggressive and dangerous police officer" who had failed to summon immediate medical assistance for Gaines, contributing to his death, and that he had conspired to "hide and distort the true facts concerning the incident." District Attorney Gil Garcetti, whose office had lost the O. J. Simpson case, opened a criminal investigation into the shooting. Lyga noticed the stares now directed his way from black cops. "I was labelled an out-of-control, racist white cop with a history," he recalls. There was talk of an official coverup, and rumors that Gaines had been the victim of an L.A.P.D. "hit."

Witnesses to various moments of the event confirmed Lyga's account, as did a surveillance camera at the minimart, which recorded the sound of Lyga firing two shots, 1.8 seconds apart. Three months after the incident, the unit investigating the shooting found that Lyga had acted according to department policy. The department's shooting board recommended no disciplinary action. But that ruling was postponed, pending results of a three-dimensional digital re-creation of the shooting.

In November, 1997, Lyga appeared again before the shooting board, which reviewed the evidence and the 3-D re-creation, and in December Bernard Parks, who had succeeded Williams as chief of police, reported that the shooting was within department policy; no action would be taken against him. The District Attorney's inquiry also eventually ruled that Lyga "acted lawfully in self-defense."

Meanwhile, Cochran's case against Lyga and the city on behalf of Gaines's family was drawing closer to a trial. Lyga, who was represented by the office of the city attorney, James Hahn, could hardly wait. "My only hope was to go to trial. I wanted to go to trial, win, lose, or draw," he says. "I wanted the facts to come out—I did not do anything wrong."

But it was not Lyga's call. Even though the re-creation of the shooting supported his story, the city and Cochran agreed to a settlement conference the following October, mediated by retired Judge R. William Schoettler, who first met separately with both sides. Cochran had reduced his request from twenty-five million dollars to eight hundred thousand; Lyga didn't want to settle at all. Cochran dropped his figure to two hundred and fifty thousand—and the city accepted.

Lyga felt betrayed. "My career, my life, is over," he recalls thinking. "I'm labelled a racist killer who was protected and covered up by the department."

Judge Schoettler wrote a letter to Parks telling him that he thought Lyga and the city would have won the case had it gone to trial. "Had the matter been submitted to me for a determination, I would have found in favor of the City of Los Angeles," Schoettler wrote. He added that a settlement had been proposed primarily to avoid adverse publicity, and said, "As you are aware, the settlement can be termed 'political' and neither the fact of the settlement nor the amount involved should in any way reflect upon the conduct of Detective Lyga." The "political" reason for settling the case seemed obvious: City Attorney Hahn was preparing to run for mayor, and black voters made up his principal base.

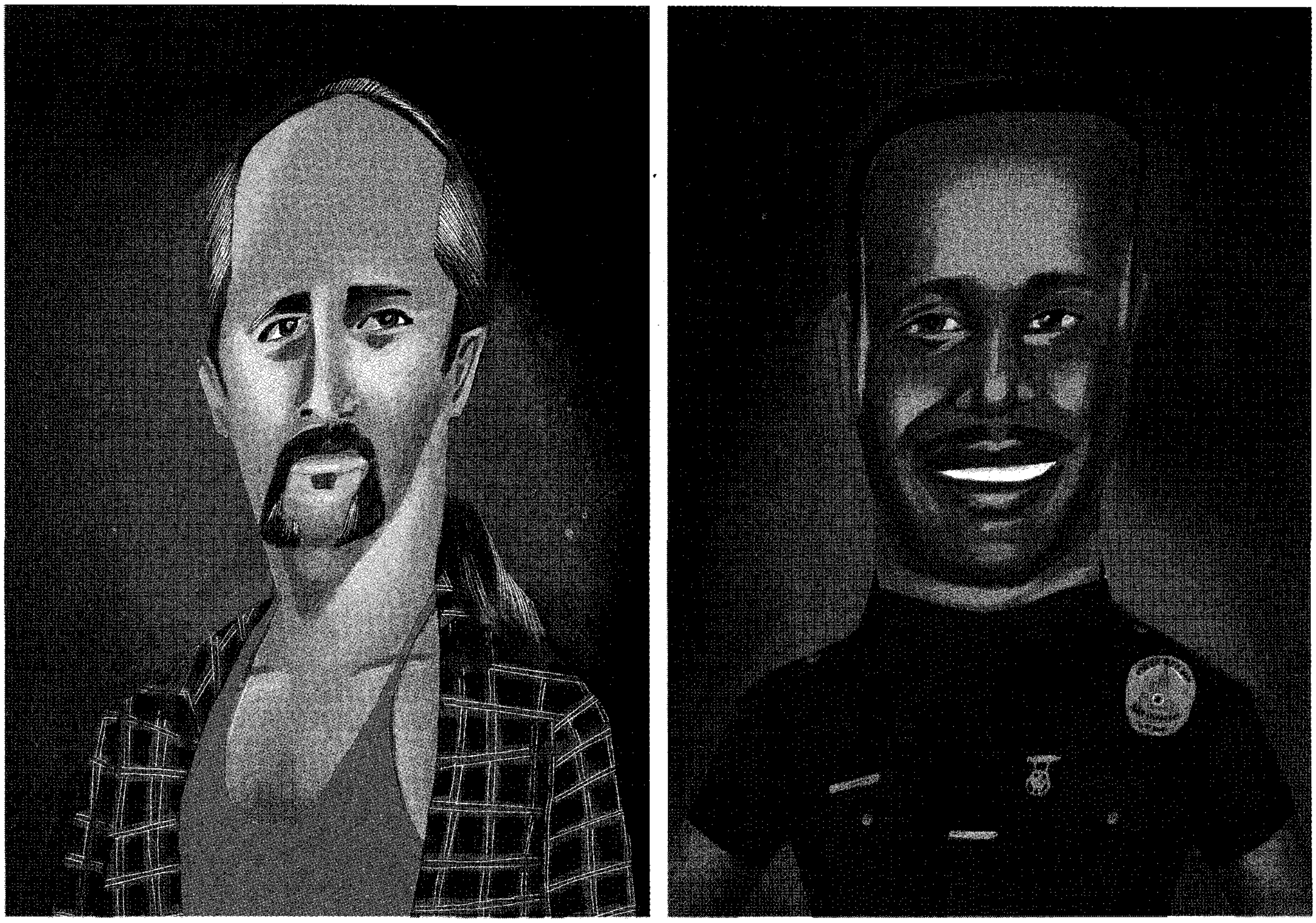
Lyga had been allowed to return to undercover work in June of 1997, and he did so harboring a measure of bitterness. He knew well why the shooting had become such an inflammatory episode. "Four little words—'No justice, no peace,'" he says now. "Bottom line, four words. That's the political environment in the City of Los Angeles."

If the L.A.P.D. seems perpetually vexed by racial politics, it is not without historic cause. In the nineteen-twenties, the department had a chief, Louis Oaks, who was a member of the Ku Klux Klan. The modern L.A.P.D. was created in the image of William Parker, whose sixteen-year reign (1950-66) was driven by two overriding priorities, neither of which was the building of a racially sensitive police force.

In coming up through the ranks of the L.A.P.D., Parker had been a clean cop in a department so dirty that even the fictional treatments of police corruption, from Raymond Chandler to Hollywood's gangster pictures, did not defame it. The department's vice unit protected whores, its exams for promotion and hiring were sold by the mayor and his brother out of City Hall, and one head of the L.A.P.D.'s intelligence squad was sent to San Quentin for bombing the car of an investigator working for civic reformers.

Parker's first imperative was to create a police force that was impeccably clean. He was compulsive about police honesty; the everyday transgressions winked at in some East Coast police departments were often grounds for instant dismissal in the L.A.P.D. In Los Angeles, police officers even bought their own coffee.

The department was, and is, startlingly small, reflecting a political culture disinclined to spend tax money on its civic structure. For much of the last half-century, the city's police force averaged about seven thousand officers, meaning that it could deploy only fif-



An investigation of the undercover cop Frank Lyga (left) turned up unsettling information on the officer he killed, Kevin Gaines.

teen officers per square mile (New York's forty-thousand-strong force deploys a hundred and twenty-nine officers per square mile). By necessity, Parker's L.A.P.D. became a highly mobile strike force, whose operational signature was aggressiveness. Its officers intervened first, and asked questions later.

"I will admit, we were a very aggressive police department," says Daryl Gates, who was once Chief Parker's driver and protégé, and who became one of his successors. "We went after crime before it occurred. We didn't sit back. . . . Our people went out every single night trying to stop crime before it happened, trying to take people off the street that they believed were involved in crime."

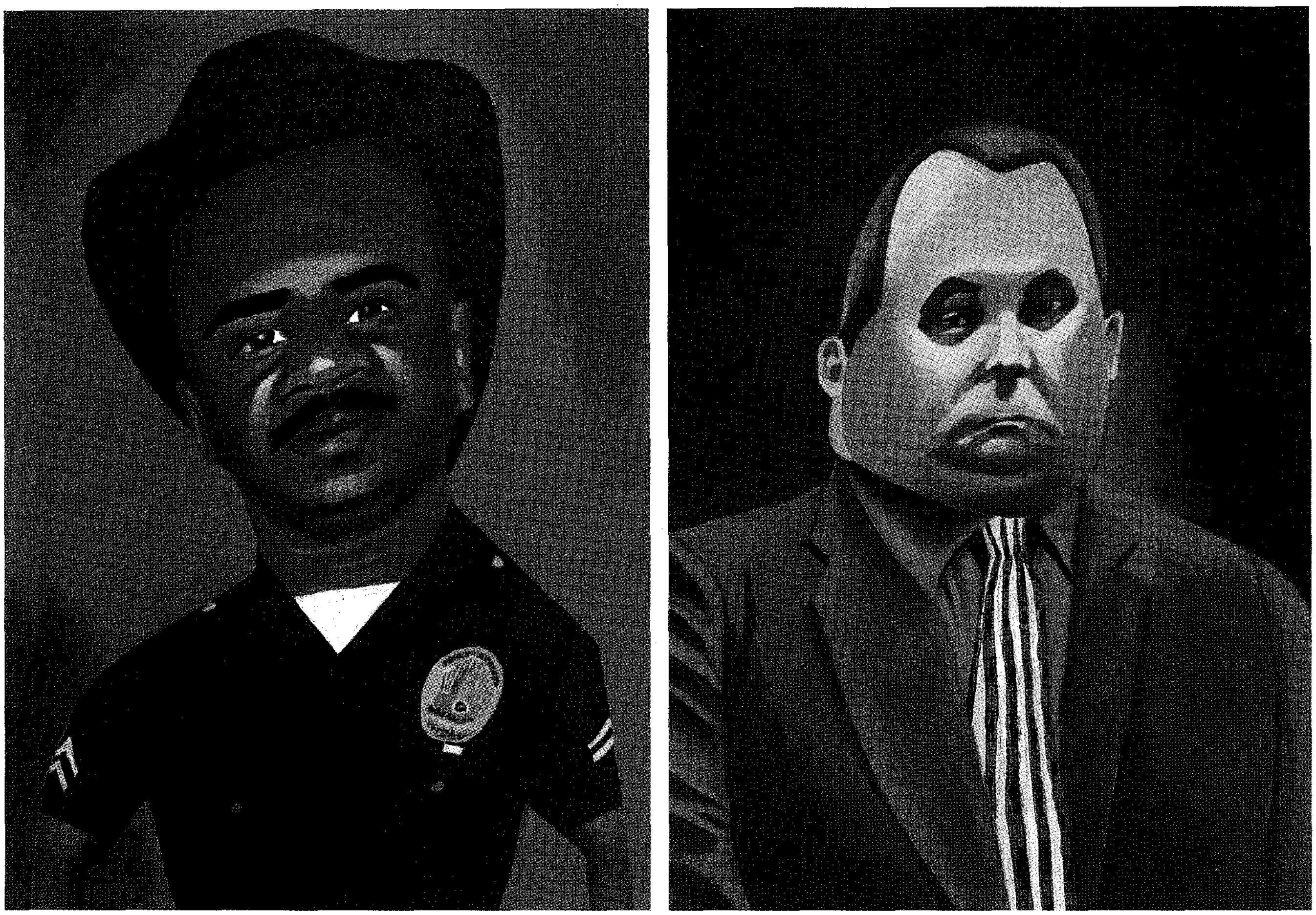
The force had a distinctly militaristic character, inculcated at an academy styled after a Marine Corps boot camp, and reflected in a department whose SWAT team was so proficient in urban-warfare tactics that it helped train American troops who snatched Manuel Noriega from Panama.

But the L.A.P.D. was not necessarily perceived as a benign presence in the city it policed. Its mission to "stop crime before it happened" felt to some like racial profiling before that term had currency, the more so because the force was for so long glaringly white. The L.A.P.D. didn't integrate its patrol force until 1961. As the demographic profile of Los Angeles changed—the black population quadrupled between 1940 and 1960—certain sections of the city began to view the police force as an occupying army. The illusion of a dreamy, well-ordered, monochromatic Los Angeles, as projected by the L.A.P.D.-approved "Dragnet" series, was pretty well shattered by the Watts riot, in 1965.

That year, Johnnie Cochran filed his first claim against the L.A.P.D. By the time of the Rodney King incident, twenty-six years later, Cochran had become the dean of a flourishing "police-brutality bar," which portrayed the department as a congenitally brutal force given to victimizing minority citizens. There was a saying that the New York Police Department was corrupt but not violent, and the L.A.P.D. was violent but not corrupt. Critics of the L.A.P.D. coined a term to describe the type of malfeasance they discerned in the department—"force corruption."

As the criticism increased, the department found itself defending even its fundamental tactics, such as the upper-body control hold that was drilled into every recruit at the academy. This technique, used to subdue a resistant suspect, was also known as a choke hold, and became controversial in the early eighties with the revelation that fatalities occurred disproportionately among black arrest subjects. Chief Gates suggested in 1982 that the hold was killing blacks because their "veins or arteries do not open up as fast as they do in normal people." That statement, along with a couple of publicized choke-hold deaths that year, produced a ban on the technique. Gates, who complains that the ban left cops with only a gun and a club, predicted that the number of injuries would rise, and they did.

Racial issues upset the department from within, as well. In 1980, the city settled two discrimination lawsuits against the L.A.P.D., one private and one fed-



Officer David Mack (left) lived a secret life off duty. Brian Liddy was the perfect Daryl Gates-Joseph Wambaugh-style cop.

eral, by signing consent decrees mandating minority and female hiring quotas. Women, blacks, and Hispanics joined the department in sizable numbers, but the hiring program seemed only to heighten racial tensions on the force. In 1986, the Los Angeles *Times* published the results of a three-month study showing that women and minorities felt they were being denied promotion and assignment opportunities, and that some white male officers felt the department had degraded its standards.

When a plumbing-supplies store manager named George Holliday videotaped the arrest of Rodney King, in 1991, he captured a scene that only confirmed a view of the L.A.P.D. that some in Los Angeles already held. A year later, a jury without blacks acquitted the officers who had beaten King, and the city burned for three days. By 1995, black disaffection had reached such a point that Cochran and the rest of O. J. Simpson's defense team correctly guessed that it could be exploited to contest a murder rap. Their cause was helped immeasurably by Detective Mark Fuhrman, whose serial utterances of the word "nigger" fortified the defense theory that Simpson was framed in a racist police conspiracy.

II—GANGSTA COPS

Such was the atmosphere in Los Angeles when Frank Lyga and Kevin Gaines crossed paths—an atmosphere that perhaps obscured some troubling information that arose from that incident. While Frank Lyga's background was being examined, investigators also pieced together a profile of the cop he had killed, and what they found startled them. Off duty, Kevin Gaines was apparently given to violent outbursts, causing his wife to file several domestic-abuse complaints. Investigators learned that he had been involved in other road-rage incidents, and in at least one case he had allegedly threatened to "cap" a motorist who had annoyed him.

The most bizarre event in Gaines's recent past had occurred the summer before his run-in with Lyga, when cops responded to a 911 report of a shooting on the grounds of a Hollywood Hills mansion. Gaines, off duty, pulled up to the scene and got involved in an altercation with the responding officers. Their account was that Gaines became verbally abusive and provocative, and had to be handcuffed. "Tell these motherfuckin' assholes to take the cuffs off of me, motherfucker!" Gaines shouted. He taunted the officers, saying that he hated "fucking cops." Gaines's account was that he'd been mistreated by the police. He hired an attorney and filed a notice of claim against the city. When the incident was investigated by the L.A.P.D.'s Internal Affairs division, it was discovered that the 911 call had been made by Kevin Gaines himself. "The evidence suggests that he did that to engage L.A.P.D. in a confrontation and basically wanted to secure a pension or whatever by filing a lawsuit," Russell Poole, a former L.A.P.D. detective, says.

Poole, a robbery-homicide detective who was assigned to investigate possible criminality in the Lyga-Gaines shooting, later wondered why that 911 incident had not been more thoroughly pursued by Internal Affairs, which was

"The cat's away—what would you like to hear?"

at the time directed by Deputy Chief Parks. Falsely reporting a crime was against the law, and would likely have warranted Gaines's removal from the force. Even more significant was the identity of the person who owned the Hollywood Hills home: Sharitha Knight, the estranged wife of the jailed gangsta-rap impresario Marion (Suge) Knight, who founded Death Row Records. In the course of investigating the road-rage incident, Detective Poole discovered that the S.U.V. Gaines was driving—a green Mitsubishi Montero—was registered to Sharitha Knight. It was soon learned that Sharitha had been romantically involved with Gaines for some time, and that he was living with her at the time of his death.

Investigators had been struck by the life style that Gaines had somehow managed on his salary of about fifty-five thousand dollars a year—he wore expensive suits and designer shirts, and drove a Mercedes—and the connection to Knight and Death Row began to explain it. Detectives found that Gaines had nine credit cards, and among the receipts they found in his belongings was one for a nine-hundred-and-fifty-two-dollar tab at Monty's, a Westwood steak house that was a hangout for people who worked for Death Row Records.

Poole had heard talk around the force that cops earned big money off-duty working security for Death Row; their badges and gun permits made them especially valuable. But to many cops the gangsta-rap scene as epitomized by Death Row was, on the face of it, a crime scene. Gangsta cool glorified street violence, and Suge Knight's legend as a rap kingpin was notoriously colorful; the three-hundred-and-fifteen-pound record executive had, in building and maintaining a hundred-million-dollar enterprise, supposedly dealt with business associates by dangling one man by his ankles from a hotel balcony, smashing another's face with a telephone, and forcing another to drink urine from a champagne glass.

More troubling to law enforcement were the apparent connections between Death Row and violent street gangs. The F.B.I. had been investigating Death Row since 1993, and Knight, who had grown up in Compton, was said to be a member of the Mob Piru Bloods gang, associates of which were among the permanent crowd around Death Row.

Within the L.A.P.D., the Lyga-Gaines shooting took on a new dimension. "All those things begin to reflect on his off-duty associations, how he's conducted himself," Parks says of Gaines. "We hold our people accountable for their off-duty and on-duty behavior. It's very difficult to have a life outside of the L.A.P.D. that deals in the criminal element and then come back to work and put on your badge and your uniform and say, 'I'm now protecting the community and enforcing the law.' "

On the morning of November 6, 1997, two black men entered a Bank of America branch near the University of Southern California campus, and one of them, dressed in a jacket and tie and wearing sunglasses and a beret, made his way behind the bank's security shield and, showing a 9-millimetre handgun, demanded money. The robber and his associate—a "layoff man," whose task was to serve as lookout—walked out of the bank and joined their getaway driver in a white van that had been stolen near the airport the day before. They escaped with more than seven hundred thousand dollars in two bags.

Detective Brian Tyndall, who was then working the robbery-homicide division, concluded that the bank heist had been an inside job. The stolen money was freshly "shrunk"—compressed to fit an automated teller machine—and had just been delivered by armored car that morning. The money had been ordered by the assistant manager, a young woman named Errolyn Romero. Under questioning several weeks after the robbery, Romero, who was visibly nervous, told Tyndall, "You know who it is." When Tyndall pressed her for a name, she was so nervous that she could not say it. "I suggested that it might be easier for her to write the name down on a piece of paper," Tyndall recalls. "And she tried to do that and her hand shook, and she couldn't complete the signature." Instead, Romero reached into her purse and produced a business card bearing the shield of the Los Angeles Police Department. The name on the card was David Mack.

Mack had grown up in the same Compton neighborhood as Suge Knight, and, like Knight, he'd escaped to find success in the world beyond the old neighborhood. He was a brilliant athlete, and had won a scholarship to the University of Oregon, where he ran track and made the United States national team running the eight hundred metres. He joined the L.A.P.D. in 1988. He was married, had two kids, and, by all accounts, was a good cop. But investigators discovered that, like Kevin Gaines, David Mack had a secret life off duty. He was a club crawler, a gambler, and a womanizer. After one of the women he was involved with, Errolyn Romero, became an assistant manager at the bank, Mack saw his chance at the big score.

When Mack was arrested, in December, 1997, he refused to coöperate with police. He didn't tell them who his accomplices were, or what had happened to the money. "Take your best shot," he told Tyndall. He was apparently content to serve out his term—fourteen years in federal prison—and have the money to look forward to upon his release. When Mack was in custody, his jailers began to notice a gradual transformation in him. He started using a red toothbrush, then wearing a pair of red socks, and soon he was adorned by as much red as could be obtained, given his circumstances. David Mack renounced the L.A.P.D. and aligned himself with the Bloods. "It appears he has completely divested himself of all relationships of his life as a police officer," Parks says, "and he is basically a gang member. He has taken on the role of being a gang member in jail."

During their investigation, Detective Tyndall and his colleagues found that, on the force, Mack had kept to a tight circle of friends, mostly African-Americans. They also discovered that, two days after the bank robbery, two of those friends had accompanied Mack to a weekend blowout in Las Vegas, and that one of them was Mack's ex-partner from the narcotics beat, a former marine named Rafael (Ray) Perez.

Three months after Mack's arrest, on March 2, 1998, six and a half pounds of cocaine were checked out from the property room at L.A.P.D. headquarters downtown and not returned. The coke, evidence in a drug-seizure investigation, had been stored in case it was needed as an exhibit in trial, but there was no trial and thus no legitimate reason for the evidence to have been checked out.

The evidence had been checked out under the name Joel Perez, and there was an officer with that name on the force, but investigators determined that someone else had signed his name. When a clerk at the police property room recollected that Rafael Perez had once checked out a large amount of cocaine, investigators began zeroing in on him. The cocaine theft, on top of what had been discovered about Kevin Gaines and the David Mack bank robbery, suggested a picture of corruption more ominous than any of the misdeeds alone. In any case, it was a possibility that had to be put before Chief Parks.

Unlike his predecessor, Willie Williams, Parks had spent his entire career on the force; he was a straight arrow who managed to avoid being ensnared by the department's political controversies without ignoring them. He was a founding member of the Oscar Joel Bryant Foundation, the black officers' organization, but he wasn't a group activist. He rose steadily in a department that had quelled the aspirations of many black officers. "Bernie Parks is L.A.P.D., and he's a cop through and through," Daryl Gates says.

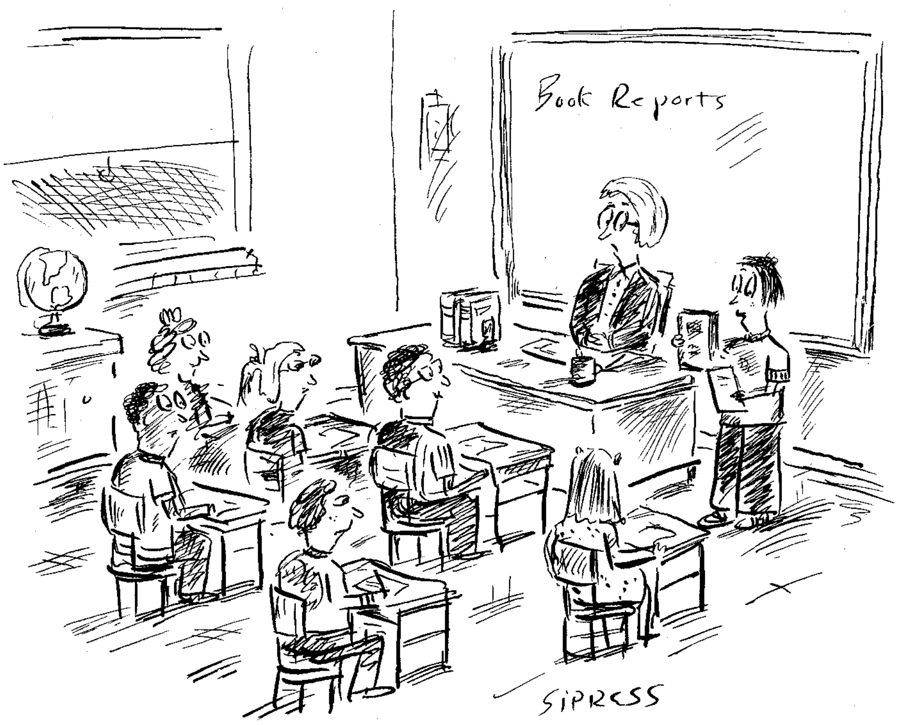
Parks had been Gates's driver (as Gates had been Parker's), but, as he rose to command level, he had sometimes been said to be a cautious critic of Gates's style, and even of the L.A.P.D. culture. After Gates was eased out of the job, in 1992, and it became obvious that the next chief would be black, Parks was a natural choice. When the job went to the Philadelphian Williams, Parks did not go out of his way to help the new chief to succeed, and when Williams failed to win reappointment, in 1997, Parks finally got his chance.

Gates reflexively defended the force whenever controversy arose, and an important lesson Parks took from the decade preceding his appointment was that Gates had done the department a disservice by failing unequivocally to condemn the Rodney King cops. Parks bristled whenever he heard cops argue that the King beating had been, strictly speaking, within policy. "When we did not have the ability to send a message to the community that we were going to be objective in evaluating the set of circumstances, it caused the community to have less trust in us," Parks says. "And I think that's the real issue; how we addressed it is as important as what occurred."

Now, faced with a budding scandal on his own watch, Parks was determined to act decisively in exposing and eliminating what he and his investigators believed might be a crew of gangsta cops.

"Perez is a good friend of David Mack's, both were good friends of Gaines's," Parks says. "I think the picture reflected that we had some people on this department that were, in a coördinated effort, involved in some very serious criminal misconduct."

Parks ordered the formation of an investigative task force to solve the co-



"I thought it was pretty good, for a book."

caine theft, and to see if it was connected to the bank robbery or to other criminal activity. The task force decided to focus its investigation on Rafael Perez.

When Perez was a boy and was living near Philadelphia, where he and his mother settled after leaving Puerto Rico, he would watch the cop shows on TV and imagine himself one day having a badge and a gun. He went from high school to the Marines, and from the Marines to the police academy in Los Angeles, where he breezed through and, in 1989, joined the force. After his rookie tour on patrol, Perez was assigned to a special narcotics unit, where he teamed up with a veteran cop whom he came to idolize, David Mack.

Perez and Mack were on a "buy and bust" team, which meant that they travelled undercover throughout the city buying dope on the streets, working with the narcotics squads in different divisions to make arrests. Frank Lyga remembers working with them several times in the Hollywood division, and being struck by the fealty that Perez accorded to Mack. "Ray Perez was the underling and a wanna-be David Mack," Lyga recalls. "David Mack was the supreme leader, and Ray Perez was the supreme follower. Where one was, the other one was, always."

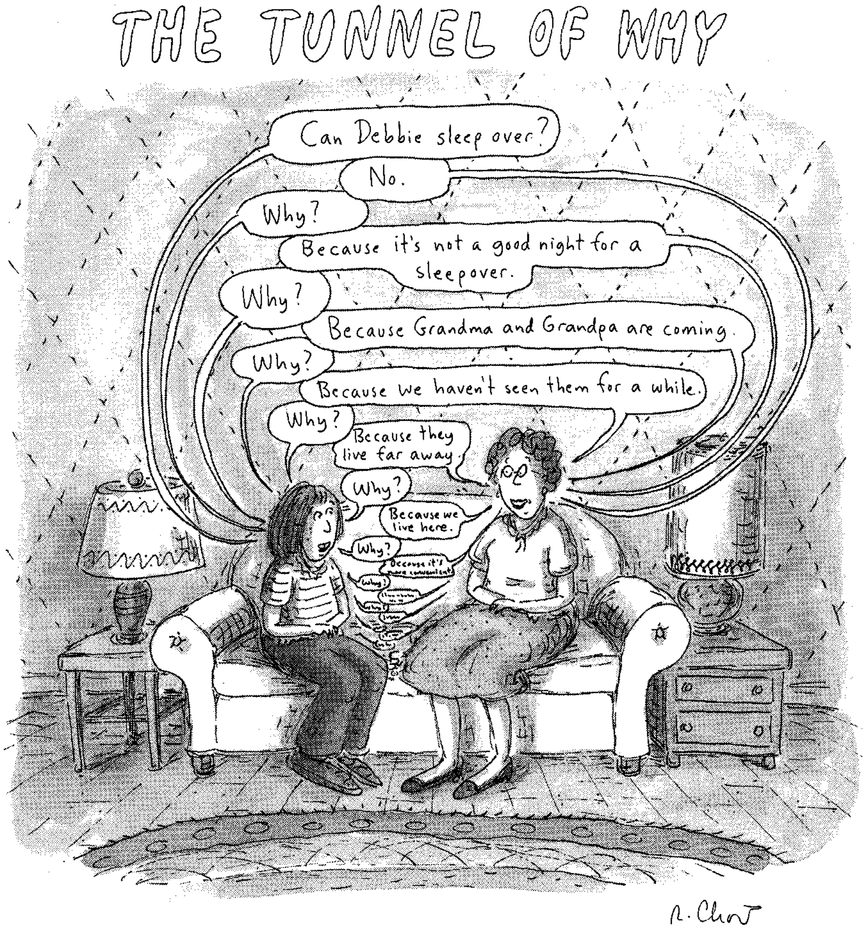
Perez later cast his loyalty to Mack as a case of combat bonding, citing an incident in 1993, when Perez says he found himself staring down the barrel of a drug dealer's gun, pleading for his life, and Mack shot the assailant. (This account has since been disputed by eyewitnesses.)

In 1995, Perez was transferred to the department's élite anti-gang team, CRASH (for Community Resources Against Street Hoodlums), in the Rampart division. The custom at special units such as CRASH was that a prospective member needed to have a sponsor on the team. Perez's sponsor was an officer named Sammy Martin, a close friend of David Mack's. (Mack is a godfather to Martin's son.) It was Sammy Martin who accompanied Perez and Mack on their Las Vegas spree.

Based on those connections, and the statement from the property-room clerk, the task force put Perez under surveillance and began to profile him. It found a pattern in his off-duty life style that was strikingly similar to Mack's. "Again, a very outgoing, charismatic type person, likes the finer things in life, liked to party a lot," Detective Tyndall, who was assigned to the task force, says. "Both were womanizers, had a very active social life. . . . On a policeman's salary, you can do that as long as you're single. But Ray was married and has a child, so we're starting to put together the picture now that his extracurricular activities are going to have to be supplemented in some way."

Investigators subpoenaed Perez's telephone records, and were surprised to find that he sometimes made more than a hundred phone calls in a day. On the day that the cocaine was checked out, Perez called an unidentified person in the Rampart neighborhood just after the transaction. Detectives traced the number to a Bella Rios, one of several aliases used by a Honduran woman more commonly known as Veronica Quesada. She was a sometime night-club singer with a drug record, and when detectives called on her they got lucky. Inside Quesada's apartment were the accoutrements of the drug trade—a razor-marked table, and chemicals for converting powder cocaine into rock. As the detectives were interviewing Quesada, the front door opened and in walked Quesada's brother, Carlos Romero, who was the subject of two outstanding felony-arrest warrants for drug dealing. The officers frisked Romero, and found in his right-front trouser pocket a quarter pound of cocaine, freshly cut from a brick.

Romero was arrested, and while the cops were questioning Quesada she said that she needed to fetch something from a side table. When she opened the drawer, one of the detectives, Mike Hohan, noticed a startling photograph. "Sitting on top of everything," Hohan recalls, "is a picture of Rafael Perez in what we call in policeman's parlance a 'two-eleven suit.' " In the California Penal Code, two-eleven is the section for robbery, a crime that seemed to be committed by an inordinate number of people partial to nylon running suits. There was something else about the photograph that struck Hohan, something about Perez's pose. Perez was "throwing gang signs," Hohan says.


THE TUNNEL OF WHY
Can Debbie sleep over?
No.
Why?
Because it's not a good night for a sleepover.
Why?
Because Grandma and Grandpa are coming.
Why?
Because we haven't seen them for a while.
Why?
Because they live far away.
Why?
Because we live here.
Why?
Because it's more convenient.
Why?
R. Chast

It was possible that Perez had been clowning around with the hand signs, engaging in some cop humor, but, at the least, detectives could now connect Perez to both ends of the cocaine theft—the witness at the evidence room, and a dealer who could put the dope on the street. Richard Rosenthal, a deputy district attorney, who was now assigned to the task force, became even more convinced of Perez's guilt when he discovered that Perez had intervened in drug cases against Quesada and Romero, telling prosecutors that they functioned as his informants. "That evidence on top of everything else conclusively made me believe we had the right guy, and we had a provable case," Rosenthal says.

"Sometimes I wonder if there's more to life than unlocking the mysteries of the universe."

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Perez was served with a search warrant on August 6, 1998, as he was reporting to the Rampart captain's office. When he was confronted with the news, he asked, "This is about the bank robbery, isn't it?" He was arrested three weeks later.

Rosenthal believed in the case he had against Perez, but as the trial began, in December, he knew that getting a conviction would not be easy. Perez was something of a courtroom legend, a witness who could sway jurors with an air of utter credibility—even, as it turned out, in those cases when he was baldly lying. "What we had with Perez was somebody you would look at and feel that, if I were in his position and I were innocent . . . that's the way I'd act, that's when I would cry, that's when I would stammer. And that was the kind of defendant we were against," Rosenthal says.

Rosenthal got an early hint of how formidable a presence Perez was when, during the jury-selection process, one prospective juror stood up and commented on how handsome Perez was. She was excused. During the trial, Perez admitted that he'd had an affair with Quesada, that he'd even been at the property room the day the cocaine was taken—but denied that he was the one who had taken it. The jury was unable to reach a verdict—the vote was eight-to-four for conviction—and on December 23rd the judge declared a hung jury.

The prosecution team immediately went back to work, trying to build a stronger case against Perez, who remained in custody. Rosenthal, who had spent most of his career prosecuting fraud cases, had a study of Perez's financial records drawn up, with charts and graphs showing Perez's unexplained income. Meanwhile, Quesada, who was now in prison, indicated that the missing six and a half pounds wasn't all that Perez had stolen. Investigators followed up on another pound of cocaine that had gone missing the previous year—dope that had been seized in an arrest made by Frank Lyga. For a time, the investigators theorized that Perez had targeted Lyga's evidence in retaliation for Gaines's death. Then Detective Hohan had an idea: What if Perez had been stealing cocaine by checking dope out of the evidence locker, replacing it with another substance, and then returning the package?

The detectives went through hundreds of pieces of evidence in the storage rooms, eventually finding eleven transfers with suspicious paperwork. They had one package of cocaine analyzed. The department chemist found Bisquick instead of cocaine. Six of the other suspicious packages had been destroyed, according to routine department procedure, but four more proved to contain "bunk"—more Bisquick. Handwriting analysis and the recollections of another property clerk showed that some of the swapped evidence had been ordered by Perez.

The task force now had Perez connected to eight pounds of cocaine, which made him what the cops call a major dealer. "I had him," Rosenthal says. "I had him nailed to the wall." On April 6, 1999, Rosenthal got a grand jury to indict Perez on the missing pound, and, increasing the pressure, added more complaints as he accumulated new evidence. Rosenthal kept hearing that Chief Parks and the department desperately wanted to deal with Perez, to "flip" him and gain his coöperation in exposing other dirty cops, and in May Rosenthal approached Perez's attorney with an offer.

Perez was represented by Winston Kevin McKesson, a lawyer who knew his way around police cases, but not from the orientation of defending cops. McKesson, who is in his forties, was born and raised in South Central Los Angeles, a neighborhood where violent crime and a fear of police were the hammer and anvil of daily life. His younger brother was killed in a fight outside their parents' home; McKesson's first college research paper was on the subject of police misconduct. After graduating from U.C.L.A. law school, he became a protégé of Johnnie Cochran's, and a notable figure in the police-brutality bar. The only cops he had previously represented were plaintiffs in discrimination suits filed against police departments.

On September 8th, during jury selection, McKesson approached Rosenthal, put an arm around his shoulder, and suggested that they talk. He had Perez give Rosenthal the barest sketch of a crime that he would confess to: the shooting of an unarmed suspect, and the planting of a gun on him. McKesson said that Perez wanted immunity on that charge and a reduced five-year term on the drug charges in exchange for exposing bad cops in the Rampart division. Gil Garcetti, the district attorney, approved the deal.

III—THE RAT

On the morning of September 10, 1999, Perez was secretly transported in handcuffs and shackles to a room in a downtown Los Angeles office tower. The unlikely meeting place, headquarters of the county transit system, had been chosen partly for security reasons, as there were concerns for Perez's life. Everyone on the law-enforcement side of the case, from Rosenthal to Chief Parks to District Attorney Garcetti, had high expectations. Within a week, David Mack would be sentenced to fourteen years in prison, and he was being investigated in connection with the 1997 killing of Biggie Smalls, the rap singer managed by Sean (Puffy) Combs, Death Row Records' East Coast rival. The hope now was that Perez might shed light on that and other unsolved crimes, including the whereabouts of the bank-robbery money and the identities of Mack's accomplices. "We didn't know if he was going to talk about Biggie Smalls's murder, the bank robbery involving David Mack, home-invasion robberies, other additional narcotics, maybe rip-offs," Detective Tyndall says. "We just weren't sure."

Rosenthal reminded Perez that if he failed to tell the complete truth the plea deal was off. "Yes, sir," Perez said, and he began to tell a story that would stun everyone in the room, except for his own attorney. Kevin McKesson knew what Perez was going to tell, and he knew that it wasn't a story about a criminal cadre of black cops. He knew that Perez, who by now had become a personal friend, was going to tell a story that confirmed what Johnnie Cochran, the brutality bar, and McKesson had been proclaiming for years about the L.A.P.D. "It hurts me to say it, but there's a lot of crooked stuff going in with L.A.P.D., especially L.A.P.D. specialized units," Perez told the investigators.

Perez said that he had gone bad while making his first drug bust on the CRASH team. He said that he and his partner, Nino Durden, had seized money from a drug dealer, and decided to keep some for themselves. Perez also described the botched police shooting, a 1996 confrontation with a nineteen-year-old gang member who'd surprised Perez and Durden during a stakeout. The two officers shot the man, Javier Francisco Ovando, hitting him in the head and chest before they realized that he was not carrying a weapon. As Ovando lay bleeding, Perez recounted, Durden wiped clean a "drop" gun they carried with them for just such an event, and placed it near the body. Then Perez and Durden began to concoct their cover story—that Ovando was a cop killer who had burst in on their observation post, intent on assassination.

Ovando had survived the shooting, only to find himself facing trial on felony-assault charges for trying to kill the two police officers. Ovando, a Honduran who speaks little English, was partially paralyzed in the incident and confined to a wheelchair; he protested that he had no gun, but in the trial Perez took the stand and calmly testified otherwise, convincing the jury of Ovando's guilt. The judge rebuked Ovando for lacking remorse, and sentenced him to twenty-three years in state prison.

Rosenthal and the officers were horrified by what Perez was telling them, but there was more. Perez said that the practice of keeping a drop gun for framing suspects was quite common in CRASH. "Everybody . . . kept one," he said. "Everybody." Bogus arrests and the writing of false police reports, he said, were the rule. "I would say that ninety per cent of the officers that work CRASH, and not just Rampart CRASH, falsify a lot of information," Perez said. "They put cases on people."

Rosenthal was hearing a prosecutor's nightmare. He had to find out one thing: Was there anyone else sitting in jail for a crime he did not commit? Perez didn't quite answer the question, saying that he would first need to see the CRASH "recap books"—logs of all activities undertaken by the unit.

"Did it happen that frequently that you can't remember?" Rosenthal asked Perez.

"I am really going to need to see those books," Perez replied.

Perez talked for three hours in that first session, and he was eager to keep going ("There's still a lot of things that we have not talked about," he told them), but Rosenthal cut the session short. He was now desperate to get Javier Ovando out of prison, and he took the unprecedented step of filing a writ of habeas corpus (usually the work of a defense lawyer), asking for Ovando's immediate release. Ovando was freed from prison within a week.

Ovando was only the first. Rosenthal had once thought that the debriefing sessions with Perez would be completed in a few weeks; they went on for more than a year, thirty-five sessions, which fill forty-five hundred pages of transcript. As Perez's story continued to unfold, the circle of alleged wrongdoers steadily widened. Perez spoke of some officers as being "in the loop"—countenancing, if not necessarily participating in, wrongdoing—so the task force compiled a list of every cop who'd been in the Rampart CRASH and narcotics divisions during Perez's time there, and had him "go through and identify who are the potential suspects," Rosenthal recalls.

Perez was also allowed to peruse fifteen hundred cases, including those in the CRASH recap books he had asked for. Detectives would deliver packages to the county jailhouse of a hundred cases at a time for Perez to go through, selecting cases to discuss at his next debriefing. Sometimes during the debriefings, Perez would volunteer a new memory that had come to him in jail. Rosenthal says that occasionally "we'd start off on an interview and he'd say, 'You know what? I was laying around last night, and I remembered that there was something we need to discuss.' " Other times, Perez would fill in the blanks on incidents that he hadn't witnessed himself, "but he knew what was going on," Rosenthal says.

"If we were to believe Officer Perez," Garcetti says, "we had a rogue group of cops who were totally out of control, who were unsupervised, who were their own little enforcement group." Indeed, Perez portrayed Rampart CRASH as a secret gang in blue, with its own logo (a white skull with a cowboy hat, flanked by playing cards arranged in the "dead man's hand"—aces and eights) and an awards system for shoot-outs with gangsters.

Investigators found that at least some of what Perez said about the Rampart CRASH culture was true. For example, at the time Perez was under investigation the department was also looking into a complaint against a Rampart CRASH officer named Brian Hewitt, who was accused of beating a handcuffed gang member while he was in custody at the station. Hewitt and another policeman, Ethan Cohan, who saw the beaten gang member but did not report the incident promptly, were fired by the department. Both officers were also accused by Perez of other wrongdoing. But how much of Perez's story was hype? Perez's eventual catalogue of misdeeds ranged from his own shooting and frameup of Javier Ovando to allegations of guns being routinely planted on suspects, cops drinking beer on the job, and cops allowing a suspect to lie bleeding rather than calling for medical attention.

The investigation was a messy process, because it had no precedent. Perez would tell the task force about a bad case, and the detectives would fan out to prisons or to a village in Central America or to wherever the wronged party could be found, trying to corroborate Perez's story. Rarely was Perez's account of an event fully verified—even Ovando's version of the shooting incident differed significantly from Perez's—but Chief Parks had declared early on, "We take Rafael Perez at his word," and so, for the most part, the detectives did. In a way, they had no choice, because Perez's word was by itself enough to undermine confidence in any case in which he had made the arrest, written the report, or testified in court.

"At that point, no one was seriously questioning the allegations that he was making," Judge Larry Paul Fidler, of the Los Angeles Superior Court, says. "It rocked everybody back on their heels." As supervising judge of the Superior Court's criminal division, Fidler was responsible for deciding whether or not to grant the writs and overturn the cases that Perez was identifying. Fidler held Rosenthal in high regard, and he felt that the court had no choice but to grant the writs—more than a hundred of them so far.

Inevitably, when transcripts of Perez's debriefings were leaked, his untested allegations became fixed in the public mind. Defense attorneys began to employ the "Perez defense," claiming that Perez's picture of what happened in Rampart might well have happened in the case of their client, and therefore the jury should acquit. "That was the standard, if you will, the battle cry in almost every case," Judge Fidler says.

When Javier Ovando was released from prison, on September 16, 1999, he was flown home to Los Angeles by the L.A.P.D. But, before he even boarded the plane, he was approached by Gregory Moreno, a lawyer in the Los Angeles police-brutality bar, who a few days later landed Ovando as a client. In October, Moreno filed suit against the city, and the only real question was how much the settlement would be. "When this came out, it was the opportunity that many of us had waited for," Moreno says, "and we were blessed to be able to be at the forefront." Rodney King had received a settlement of $3.8 million, and Moreno had recently won a settlement of $5.3 million against the county sheriff's office. For Ovando, he says, "fifteen million dollars was the right figure."

In February, 2000, Johnnie Cochran convened a Saturday summit meeting of the city's leading police critics and brutality-bar attorneys, to see how they might respond to what one lawyer called "a situation that is tailor-made for reform." Among those who spoke to the gathering was Cochran's protégé Kevin McKesson.

As more convictions were overturned, more lawsuits were filed. Ruben Rojas, a gang member whom Perez acknowledged having framed on a dope charge, won a settlement for a million dollars. His attorney, Gregory Yates, eventually ended up with sixty Rampart clients. He bundled twenty-nine of those cases together for an eleven-million-dollar set-

"Summer's coming. How does pre-med camp sound?"

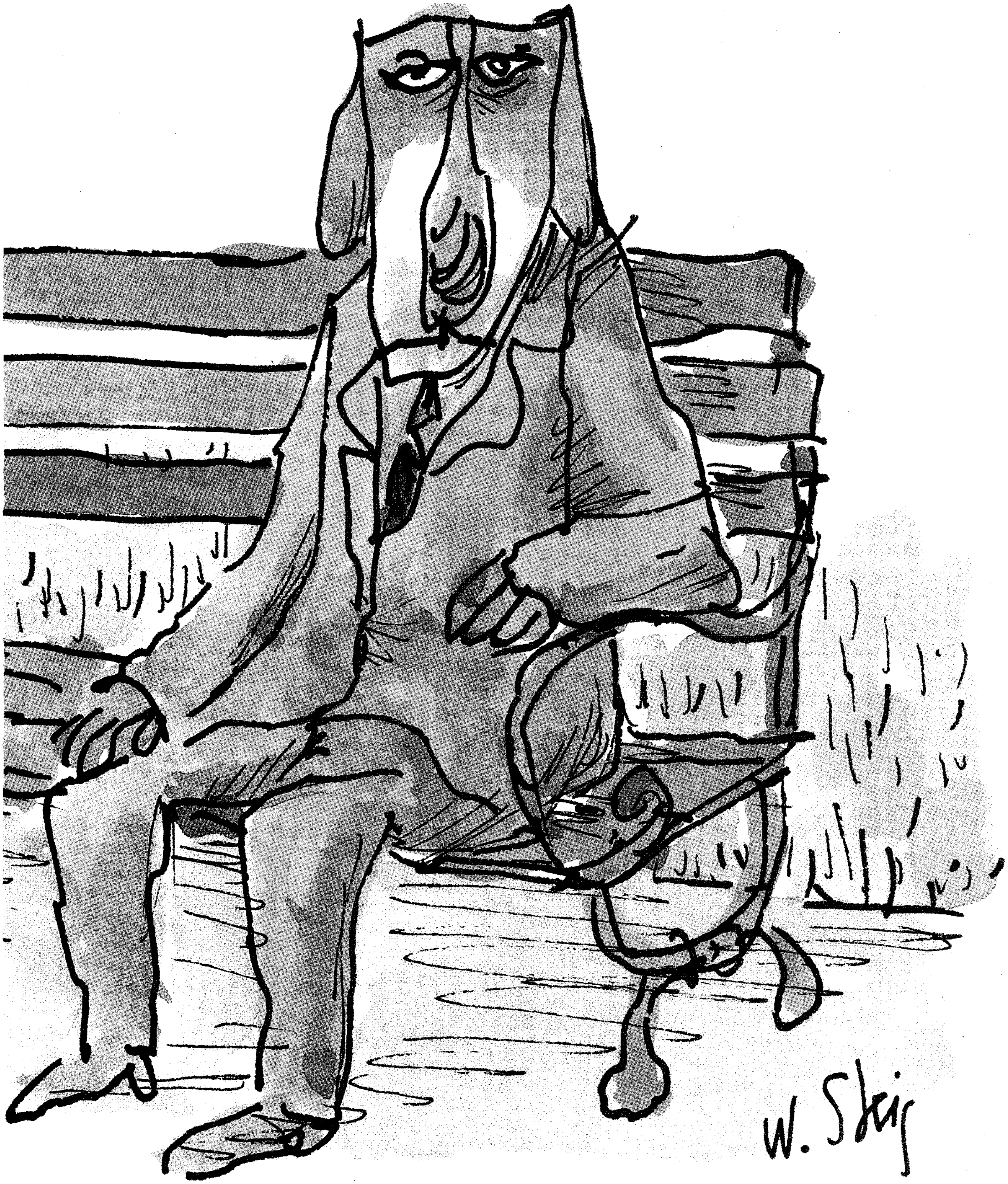
tlement last December, and the Beverly Hills branch of the Wells Fargo Bank stayed open late one Friday night just to handle all the deposits. Forty-three settlements have been made already, ranging from twenty-five thousand dollars to Ovando's fifteen million.

Some have accused plaintiffs' lawyers of rank opportunism, and Yates has heard the charge of "police-car chasing." He is unmoved. "Who else is going to do it?" he asks. "Who else is going to seek redress for these people?"

In the wake of the Rodney King beating, Congress passed a law allowing federal oversight of local police departments that had been found guilty of a pattern of depriving citizens of their rights. The law has been used by the Justice Department to establish federal oversight of police forces in Pittsburgh, in New Jersey, and in Steubenville, Ohio, and was cited by those (such as the New York City mayoral candidate Mark Green) proposing federal oversight of the New York Police Department after the 1997 brutalizing of Abner Louima. The Justice Department opened a civil inquiry into the L.A.P.D. in 1996; it had no discernible result until the Rampart scandal lent it new impetus. In the waning days of the Clinton Administration, the acting head of Justice's civil-rights division, Bill Lann Lee, threatened to sue Los Angeles to prove a "pattern or practice" of excessive force and rights abuses unless the city consented to federal oversight. Chief Parks and the city's mayor, Richard Riordan, opposed the agreement, but Rampart sapped their political capital on the issue, and the city council relented to the feds.

Among the reforms imposed on the department are some that were first urged after the Rodney King incident, including a computerized "early warning" system for tracking problem officers. There is now also a mandate to maintain a running tally of all police stops, categorized by the subject's ethnicity and gender—an intended guard against racial profiling.

There were some topics on which Rafael Perez had very little to say, and they happened to be the subjects that the task force had hoped he might illuminate when he was given his immunity deal. He said he had not known Kevin Gaines, and that, contrary to Frank Lyga's


W. Steig

assertion, he had never met Lyga while working narcotics, or anywhere else.

On the subject of his friend David Mack, Perez was similarly unhelpful. "I considered him a very good friend who saved my life," Perez said when the subject first came up. "Was I involved in that bank robbery? No. Was this a big coincidence that we both end up in this kind of trouble, or he ends up in that type of trouble, and I—" He stopped himself, then concluded, "It's a very big coincidence." Perez said he knew nothing about Mack's accomplices, or about what Mack had done with the stolen money.

"He seems to have a very strong relationship—I don't know if that's fear, or an affection—with Mr. Mack," Gil Garcetti says. "I'm absolutely convinced he knows something he has never told us."

That opinion is shared by police and prosecutors who have dealt with Perez. Suspicion grew among some of them that he had directed—or possibly misdirected—the course of the scandal investigation. "He's deflecting us everywhere else but where we should be," says one officer who is deeply involved in the case, and believes that he gave Perez too much credence. "The task force just went wherever he took them. He's counting on getting out in June."

Detective Tyndall says that he came to sense that Perez was almost taunting the investigators. "He was eating this up," Tyndall says. "He knew that, this whole production, he was the center, he was the star. And he was going to take advantage of it to the utmost."

When Perez directed the investigation toward other cops in Rampart CRASH, Garcetti hoped that at least some implicated officers would turn, and coöperate in exposing others. But that didn't happen. Instead, cops fought the charges in police Board of Rights hearings—proceedings argued before a panel comprising two command officers and a citizen. Most of the hearings found in favor of the officers. Still, there was enormous political and media pressure for a definitive outcome, and the District Attorney's office felt most of it. Gil Garcetti had won another term after his team lost the O. J. Simpson case, but his standing with voters was precarious as he faced the November, 2000, election. Chief Parks, determined to be seen as leading the fight against police corruption, criticized Garcetti publicly and often for not bringing criminal cases against Rampart officers, and Garcetti countered that there was no case yet to bring.

"My position is, all we have is Rafael Perez pointing the finger," he says. "That's all I have. A convicted perjurer, a liar, a thief. We get to a court, it will never even get to a jury. The judge will have to dismiss the case."

"If he doesn't go nuts, he'll be the first person ever to write a novel on a cell phone."

Eventually, as the pressure continued, Garcetti decided that he would have to go with what he had despite his own misgivings. "Once we could see we were not going to get any police officers from within the department, that's almost the end of the case," Garcetti recalls. "You take the little bits and pieces that are left, and you go forward with that prosecution."

IV—A VERY GOOD OFFICER

The criminal accusations that Garcetti's office chose to prosecute came to trial last October 4th, in the courtroom of Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Jacqueline A. Connor. To the extent that the Rampart scandal had become a stain on the character of the L.A.P.D., the case could not have been more fitting. One defendant, a thirty-nine-year-old cop named Brian Liddy, was the perfect embodiment of the department of Daryl Gates and Joseph Wambaugh, for better and worse.

Like Perez, Liddy had always wanted to be a cop. His father kept bar at a tavern in the Bronx which was a hangout for off-duty cops. He joined his first civilian force in Norwalk, Connecticut, and quickly became a star. Dana McIndoe, his first captain in Norwalk, says, "He had a nose for finding the bad guys. . . . I don't know how to put it—he was just born to be a police officer, I guess."

Liddy, a burly man with a sardonic air, was an aggressive cop who "had his rough edges," McIndoe says, and a number of complaints were filed against him. "I talked to him a few times about minor indiscretions," McIndoe says, "and one thing I'll say about Brian, if he messed up, he said he did. He'd come out and say, 'Yeah, I did it. I lost my cool and yelled at the guy, called him a coupla names.'"

Like Frank Lyga, Liddy believed that the L.A.P.D. was the best force in the world, and after visiting a friend in California he determined to try to join the department he called "the varsity." But the L.A.P.D. first wanted to know about an incident in Liddy's private life, in which a woman he knew had accused him of sexual assault. Liddy had protested his innocence, and a jury acquitted him in a matter of minutes. The

L.A.P.D. looked into the matter, and admitted Liddy into its ranks.

On April 29, 1992, when Liddy arrived for roll call at the Seventy-seventh Street station, in the heart of the city's South Central district, cops were congregating around a TV set watching a news report that a Simi Valley jury without any black members had just acquitted the L.A. cops accused in the Rodney King beating. A few blocks from the station, near Seventy-first Street, a young black man named Mark Jackson was changing the brakes on a friend's car when a neighbor came by and said she'd just heard the verdict reported. Jackson and his friends started grousing about the verdict, and soon other people came into the streets, shouting "Rodney King! Rodney King!"

A short while later, Liddy and his partner, Terry Keenan, along with a third officer, were riding in their patrol car when, over the radio, they heard a call for help, signalling that officers were in trouble. They drove to the corner of Seventy-first Street and Normandie, where a boisterous crowd had encircled two cops who were in the middle of arresting a teenager after their patrol car was showered with rocks and bottles. The young man had tried to escape by climbing a fence. When the cops pulled him back down, the crowd began jeering, and chanted, "Fuck the police!" Liddy, Keenan, and the other officer singled out two of the instigators, Mark Jackson and his friend Cerman Cunningham, and arrested them, but only after a struggle in which Jackson was slammed against the patrol car before finally being pushed inside.

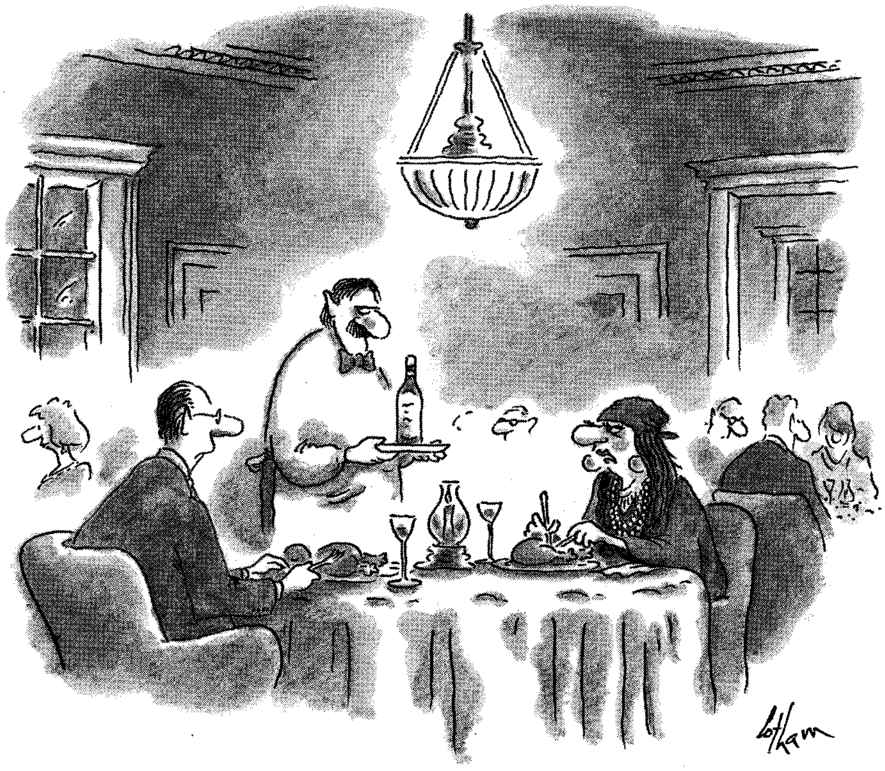
The arrests further excited the crowd, and, as Liddy was getting ready to drive away, Jackson's younger brother, Damian Williams, turned his back to the police and dropped his trousers, mooning the officers, to great cheers. About then, Liddy's lieutenant, Michael Moulin, arrived and ordered all the officers at the scene to retreat, leaving a vacuum in the streets that was quickly filled by the mob.

The crowd, Damian Williams among them, moved a block south, to the intersection of Florence and Normandie, where Tom's Liquor Store was soon overrun by looters. With booze flowing, people started throwing bottles at passing cars. Motorists were dragged out of their cars and beaten. Then a truck driver named Reginald Denny, en route to Inglewood with a load of sand and gravel, rolled into the intersection. A group of black youths pulled him from the truck, stomped him, hit him on the back with an oxygenator, clubbed him with a crowbar, and smashed him in the face with a concrete block. As Denny lay on the street, bleeding and unconscious, one of the young men spat on him, and another rolled him over and picked his pocket. The man who hit Denny with the concrete block, and then spun into a dance over his body while flashing gang signs, was Damian Williams.

Two days later, the fires were still burning. As Liddy drove to work, a car pulled up next to his on an off-ramp near the station and one of its occupants fired at him. Liddy returned fire, and at the end of the gun battle one of the car's occupants was dead. Liddy survived the incident unhurt, and was awarded the department's highest honor, the Medal of Valor.

Brian Liddy had made the arrest that sparked the worst Los Angeles riot in a century, and won the Medal of Valor, but what made him really famous inside the force occurred a month after the riot, when Liddy was vacationing in New York. He was showing the city to his future wife, a fellow L.A. cop named Sandra Garcia (whom Liddy had met while standing over a corpse at a crime scene), when they heard a bank alarm go off near East Twenty-third Street by Third Avenue. Three men ran from the bank into a getaway car, smashed into another motorist, then fled on foot, in the direction of Liddy. He tackled one of the men, flipped him over into the "proned out" position, then held him with his arms pinned back until a New York cop arrived and handcuffed the suspect. Half a block away, Sandra Garcia had nabbed another of the suspects. Liddy and Garcia received a letter of commendation from the commander of the N.Y.P.D.'s Thirteenth Precinct.

Unlike Rafael Perez, Liddy was not a compelling presence in a courtroom. His recitation of events was coldly professional, and he didn't bother to mask his "coppers vs. assholes" attitude. This had been evident several months after the riot, in the joint trial of Mark Jackson and Cerman Cunningham. The racially mixed jury acquitted them, and jurors



"I always have chicken so I can study the entrails."

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said afterward that they didn't like the demeanor of the husky cop. "Downtown jury" was Liddy's explanation.

Liddy and Rafael Perez came to Rampart CRASH on the same day in 1995. They weren't partners, or even friends, and, when Perez left the unit for a time, Liddy argued against allowing his return. On the job, they tolerated one another.

Later, when Perez was going over lists of CRASH cops with Richard Rosenthal and the task force, rating officers as good or bad, he first mentioned Liddy as a pretty good cop with a nose for the bad guys. "I categorize him as a very good officer," Perez said. "A lot of good, uh . . . uh, Obs arrests. 'Obs' meaning observations arrests. . . . The most I've seen him do was fabricate some P.C."— probable cause for an arrest. "But could he be trusted? He could be trusted that if we told him the worst of the worst, he's gonna go, 'O.K. I'm gonna go along with the story.' Uh, but he, himself, wouldn't, uh, really be involved in doing things."

Perez made that statement in one of his first sessions, in September, 1999. By November, as his list of wrongdoers was growing, he had changed his mind about Liddy, accusing him of falsely arresting two members of the violent Temple Street gang after a raid. Perez later told Rosenthal that he'd heard that Liddy had spoken against him at CRASH, and said he thought Liddy (whom he described as "a very heavy officer who couldn't run half a block to save his life") was just jealous of him. Perez went on to implicate Liddy directly in other misdeeds, ranging from making a bad gun-possession arrest to fabricating a report in a spray-painting incident.

By the time Perez was making those allegations, Liddy had been promoted out of Rampart CRASH, and was a sergeant in the Pacific division, near the beach. He held the dual ranks of detective and sergeant, and was pleased with his career status as he began to plot the next twenty years toward his pension.

Sandra was nine months pregnant, and on the morning she went into labor Liddy's badge, I.D. card, and gun were taken from him by police authorities in the delivery room when his son was being born. He was charged, with his CRASH partner, Michael Buchanan; his sergeant, Edward Ortiz; and another CRASH officer, Paul Harper, with various acts of perverting justice in the arrests that Perez had cited.

The most important allegation arose from a July, 1996, CRASH raid on a meeting of the Temple Street gang, which was involved in a dispute with the Mexican Mafia. One of the gangsters the CRASH cops hoped to run into that night was Anthony (Stymie) Adams, who was believed to have been the trigger man in the killing of a Mexican Mafia man called Lizard in a dispute over "taxes" paid on the gang's street trade.

When the cops, including Liddy, Buchanan, and Ortiz, arrived at the meeting place, the gang was all there—Stymie, Ghost, Diablo, Wicked, Speedy among them. A police helicopter illuminated the scene, and the gang members fled. Two of them jumped into a pickup truck and sped past Liddy and Buchanan, and down the alley. Liddy and Buchanan claimed they were struck by the escaping vehicle before the driver, Raúl (Prieto) Muñoz, was captured, in possession of a .357-magnum handgun, along with his passenger, Cesar (Joker) Natividad.

Liddy and Buchanan briefly went to the hospital, then filled out the paperwork on the arrest, charging Muñoz and Natividad with assault with a deadly weapon—the pickup truck. Both gangsters pleaded guilty, Muñoz was imprisoned and then deported to El Salvador, and, in a plea deal, Natividad was released.

The issue in question was whether or not Muñoz had actually struck Liddy and Buchanan with the truck as they drove down the alley. Perez, who had been nearby at the scene, said the officers had fabricated that part of the story, even though they both had shown injuries at the time, and had gone for treatment at the hospital. As the trial began, the talk around the courthouse was that the case seemed laughably insignificant, given the magnitude that the Rampart scandal had assumed.

Liddy gave his usual charmless witness-box performance. One of the Los Angeles *Times* reporters covering the trial wrote, "Liddy was so calm and deliberate that it appeared he had no stake in how he was perceived."

Even so, Judge Connor didn't seem to believe that the prosecution had much of a case—she consistently granted defense motions, and overruled the prosecution—and neither did anyone else. For one thing, Liddy and Buchanan hadn't needed to fabricate a charge in order to arrest Muñoz, who was illegally in possession of a gun and was violating parole. Technically, they could have charged him with assault with a deadly weapon for simply coming at the two officers in the truck, even if the truck hadn't struck them.

Not only had Muñoz pleaded guilty after the incident but, when the task-force detectives visited him in El Salvador to test Perez's allegations, he told them that he didn't know whether he had struck the officers that night, and that his passenger, Natividad, might well have opened the door of the truck, striking Liddy while trying to escape. But Muñoz's conviction was overturned, mostly on the word of Perez. From El Salvador, Muñoz had hired a lawyer—Gregory Moreno, who also represented Javier Ovando—and filed a claim against the city.

Now Muñoz claimed that he'd pleaded guilty only because he didn't think anyone would believe a protest of innocence. He said that he hadn't struck the officers with his truck that night, and that the gang meeting was really just a "reunion." Indeed, he claimed that he was not really an active member of a gang (which Moreno likened to a social club for economically disadvantaged minority youths), and that he had never been involved in any criminal activity. Under cross-examination, he was obliged to admit to a 1989 shooting outside a high school when he was a juvenile.

The jury returned a verdict of guilty against Liddy, Ortiz, and Buchanan. The jurors had focussed not on the question of whether Liddy and Buchanan had been struck by Muñoz's truck but on a computerized report about the incident on which the letters "GBI"—great bodily injury—had been marked. The jurors said that Liddy and Buchanan didn't look greatly injured to them.

Judge Connor overturned the decision, and, in an eighteen-page opinion, wrote that the prosecution had not presented sufficient evidence to warrant a conviction and that the jury had ruled on the wrong point of law. "While recognizing the enormous pressure on the community, on the police force, on the district attorney's office, and on the courts to 'fix' the Rampart scandal," she said, "this court is only interested in evaluating the fairness of the proceedings in this court and determining whether justice was done in this case."

A week before the jury rendered its verdict, the voters of Los Angeles County turned Gil Garcetti out of office; his successor, Steve Cooley, has appealed Judge Connor's ruling.

Rafael Perez, who has spent his entire incarceration in the Los Angeles County Jail rather than in prison, had hoped to be freed in June. But that hope was cast into doubt in March, when Perez's former partner, Nino Durden, reached a plea agreement with federal and state prosecutors, promising to coöperate in an investigation of civil-rights abuses in the Rampart case. Sources indicate that the thrust of the federal effort is aimed at Rafael Perez.

Chief Parks's future at the L.A.P.D. is uncertain. Because of term-limit reform passed after the Rodney King episode, Parks must seek reappointment to a second term next year, and low morale within the force, as well as the Rampart developments, may become an obstacle.

Defense attorneys are still scrutinizing thousands of convictions that might have been tainted by Rampart wrongdoing, and plaintiffs' attorneys are awaiting settlement decisions in a hundred and fifty lawsuits and claims against the city.

Of the gang members who received settlements from the city, at least two have been shot by rival gang members, and three others are known to be back in prison. On March 13th, Javier Ovando, on his way to Las Vegas with friends from his old neighborhood, was arrested and charged with four felony counts of drug possession.

Brian Liddy is in personal and professional limbo, awaiting a ruling on the District Attorney's appeal and possible federal charges related to Perez's accusations. He has been working at a private security firm, and has plans to start his own business when the Rampart case is resolved. "My new company is gonna be called Centurion Security and Investigations," he says.

Looking back, the people directly involved in uncovering and assessing the Rampart scandal now find themselves unable to take its measure—and that is mostly because of Rafael Perez. "I just think when you deal with the case as it appeared when it first broke, and what you have today, it is not what people thought would happen," Judge Fidler says. "Basically, it came down to Perez. What the prosecutor has is Perez and nothing else. And when you have all your eggs in one basket and the basket's starting to come apart at the seams . . . the case just doesn't have as much strength." Chief Parks contends that the Rampart case was exploited by the news media and police critics, and in the process became distorted beyond all proportion. "The media tried to make this the crime of the century," he says. "They began to talk about 'This is the worst corruption scandal in the history of L.A.P.D.' When it's all resolved, we'll have one-tenth of one per cent of our officers involved in this issue."

In creating and, to some degree, directing the course of the Rampart scandal, Rafael Perez may have overtly lied or withheld the whole truth, and he may have protected his friends and settled old scores by implicating his enemies. Few now believe that the wrongdoing was as widespread as Perez once suggested—of the seventy officers eventually implicated by Perez, five were fired by the department and eight more resigned. What has been verified in Perez's allegations is nowhere near as serious as the crimes that he himself confessed to. Meanwhile, investigators find themselves no closer to answers about possible police involvement in the bank robbery, Death Row activities, or the death of Biggie Smalls.

Yet there was in Perez's story a compelling element of truth—the revelation of a culture within the L.A.P.D. that, at the least, countenanced a strain of rough justice in the street. In that regard, the lasting significance of the Rampart scandal, perhaps, is the opportunity that it has afforded critics of the L.A.P.D. who have long been frustrated in their efforts to reform the department. "To the critics of the system," Judge Fidler says, "this gave them the ammunition they needed to say, 'See, we've always told you the system is corrupt, it only favors the prosecution or the police—we've proved it because Officer Perez has made these allegations.' " ♦

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10

AT THE GALLERIES

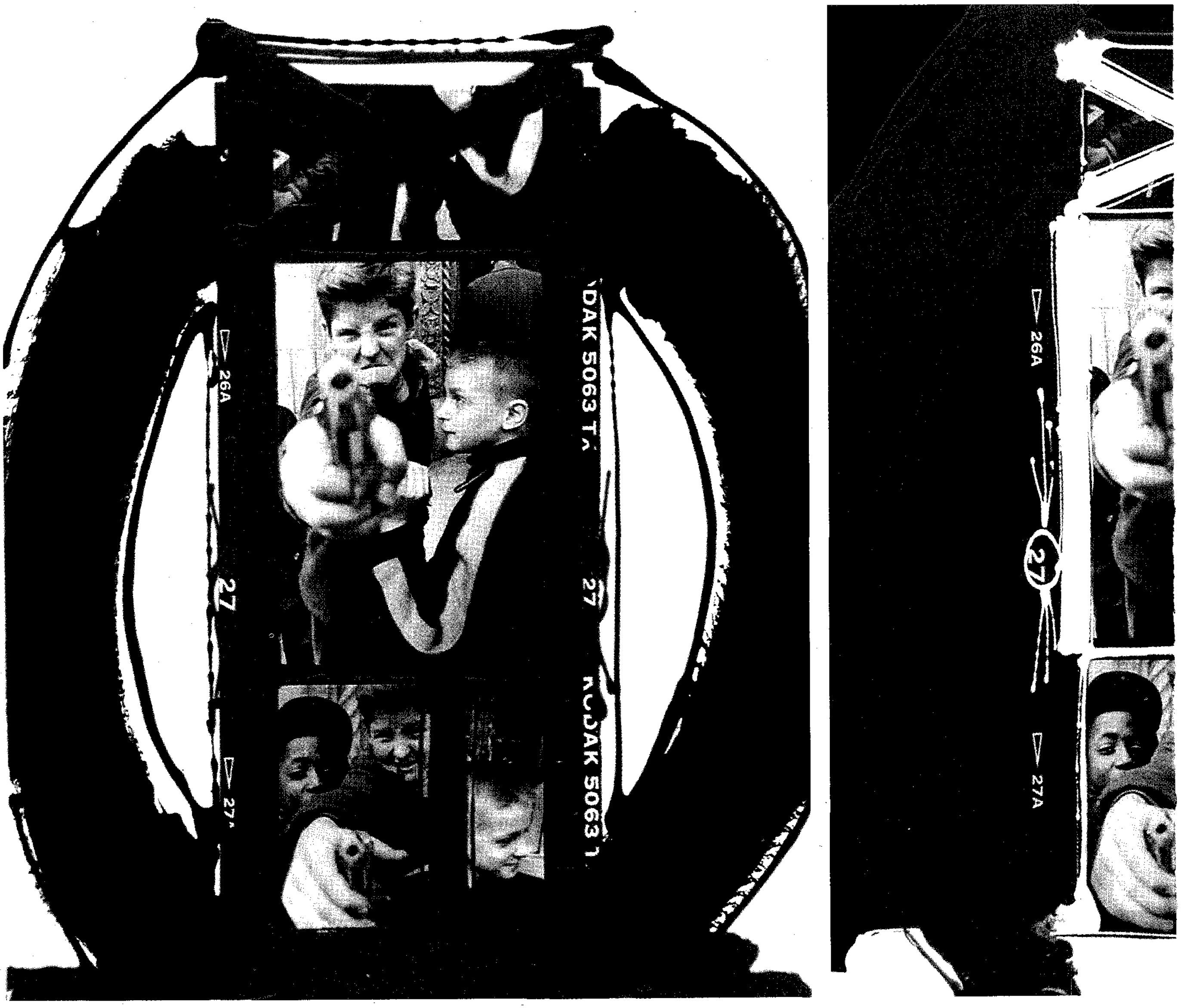
THE SHUTTERBUG

With two new shows, William Klein is back in town.

BY ANTHONY LANE

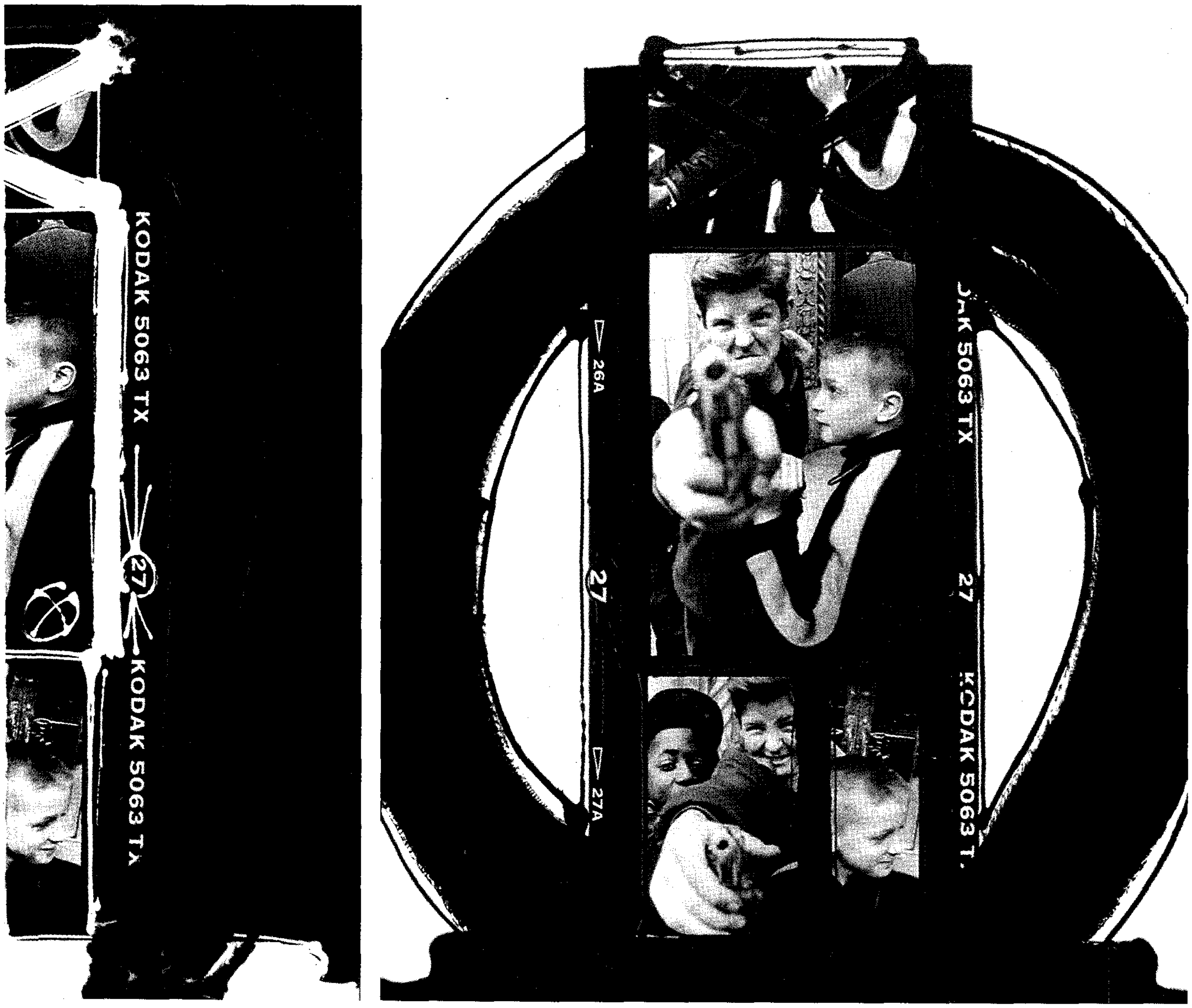
William Klein is an American photographer. One is tempted to say that he is *the* American photographer; among his coevals, only Richard Avedon can match him for stamina and range, and for a visual instinct so sure that you wonder whether both men had cameras implanted in their heads at birth. The difference is that Avedon operates out of New York City, whereas Klein, who will take any cliché you like and bust it wide open, is an American in Paris. One is tempted to say that he is *the* American in Paris: a more authentic example of the type than even Gene Kelly could pretend to be. Klein speaks English with a French trip of the tongue and French with a hefty American curve to his vowels. He arrived in Paris in the late nineteen-forties and has stayed ever since, with regular, fruitful forays to other lands. On his second day in the city he met Jeanne, "the most beautiful woman in the world," who became his wife. They live in a fourth-floor apartment, once owned by Francis Poulenc, that overlooks a northern tip of the Luxembourg Gardens: hard-core Paris, as it were, and quite a switch from 108th Street and Amsterdam Avenue, in Manhattan, where Klein grew up.

He was born in 1928, but the thought that he is now in his seventies is a joke;



Klein's painted contact sheets. He doesn't want your friends to leaf idly through "Life Is Good and Good for You in New York" w threescore and ten may be the span of man, but no one has broken the news to Klein, who still behaves as if he were turning one score and five. There is a restlessness, even a sexiness, in Klein's longevity which can only infuriate those who purport to revel in their youth. He is a big, loping fellow with a mane of white hair swept back over his collar, a roaring laugh that hangs around in his throat, and a pair of Reebok ankle boots on his hind paws. Meeting him face to face, I realized that he belongs to a genus now so rare, so closely identified with another age, that you could be forgiven for thinking it extinct. William Klein is a *cat.* I am not so experienced a naturalist as to know whether he hails from the species *hep*, but, like anyone else, I know catness when I see it, and it is there in the Klein limbs, long and loose, in the rotating riffs of his storytelling, and in the peculiar cocktail of ardor and amusement—of engaging hotly with the troubles of the world and then standing back to lend them a cool eye—that instantly summons the scent of the nineteen-fifties.

Klein's father was in the clothing business; he was all but felled by the Crash, a year after his son was born. There was money and prestige in the family, but it lay with uncles and aunts. ("I can't say they did anything, *ever*, for me.") The young Klein attended the City College of New York, but left before graduating to take advantage of the G.I. Bill of Rights. He was dispatched by train to Fort Riley, Kansas. "For the first time, I saw America," he recalls. "I couldn't go to sleep." He joined the cavalry—as a radio operator on horseback, which sounds like a Surrealist collage—and wound up in occupied Germany. "Someone looked through my record and found that I had got out of university at eighteen, that I spoke a little French, and they chose twenty-five soldiers to go to the Sorbonne," he says. He never saw action—not the military kind, at any rate. The Klein luck held, and he found himself taking art lessons from Fernand Léger. ("Léger was something else. He looked like Rocky Marciano. He looked like he could take them on. Lee Marvin, the French version.") Some of Klein's early paintings—I saw racks of them in one of his Paris studios—show a chunkiness that betrays the muscular presence of his master, although the young man's talent was always going to be more kinetic than Léger's, less embarrassed by the



VARIATIONS OF "GUN 1, NY 1955" (1999-2001)/COURTESY CHARLES COWLES GALLERY

scussing schools or tickets for the Met; he wants them to pick it up, flinch, and wish they had worn oven mitts.

BLACKJACK
FREE LEMONADE!
Shanahan

force of the fleeting. In 1952, some of Klein's murals were shown in Milan, where he took photographs of them; it was not the first time he had picked up a camera—in a myth that he confirmed to me as accurate, he had won a Rolleiflex in a poker game with other G.I.s—but it was only then that he understood the firepower of his new weapon.

From here, events moved fast. His abstract shots were featured on the cover of an architectural magazine called *Domus* and seen by a guy from a fashion magazine called *Vogue*. This was Alexander Liberman, no less, the art director who could spot talent an ocean away and bring it home. By 1954, the prodigal son was back in New York, on a five-month stay, with a dream brief: come and work for us, carte blanche, two hundred bucks a week, limitless photographic supplies, and while you're about it, shoot the city. "I approached New York like a fake anthropologist," Klein says, "treating New Yorkers like Zulus." He and Jeanne lived in a small hotel; "I would print like a maniac—fifty photos a night, washing them in a bathtub."

The result was "Life Is Good and Good for You in New York: Trance Witness Revels," which was published in 1956—published in France, that is, to instant acclaim. It did not appear in America, a laughable omission that remained uncorrected until the book was reprinted in 1995. New York publishers turned up their noses. "They would say, 'What kind of New York is this? It looks like a slum.' I said, 'Listen. New York *is* a slum. You live on Fifth Avenue, you come to your office on Madison Avenue—what do you know? You ever been to the Bronx?' " Not only did Klein design the book himself; he alerted readers—those who could get hold of the thing—to the possibility that a photography book, no less than a photograph itself, could be a work of art. "My first idea was to do a collection of the front pages of the New York *Daily News*." What emerged was hardly less alarming. There are no captions, and the rhythm of the layout keeps to no known beat: some shots are bordered in white, others leak across the central gutter or spill to the edge. At one point, Klein uses a spread to mount an all-out assault; each facing page shows the front of a movie theatre, ablaze with names of the period (Van Heflin, Cesar Romero, Leo Genn) and tilted so that the lights on the marquees bounce and gleam off the enamelled darkness of a car. The whole book ends with a bang: a sun raging low on the Manhattan skyline, printed with such rich pointillist grain that what was, presumably, a nice warm day is cranked up into an artist's impression of a nuclear firestorm. Just what America wanted in 1956.

A mint first edition of "Life Is Good and Good for You in New York" will set you back four thousand dollars or so; the same goes for its celebrated sequels, "Rome" (1958-59), "Moscow" (1964), and "Tokyo" (1964). In each case, Klein developed a style that was utterly his own while insuring that he answered the public demands of reportage; if you stare at the broad-boned, stoical features of his Muscovites, you feel yourself planted in a real place, and yet the elastic intensity of such portraits could have issued only from Klein. Much of this springs from technique; until he came along, the wide-angle lens was largely the preserve of landscape photographers, or a witty aid to social perspective. In his hands, it made the world fatten and bulge; nothing was safe from his reinvention, not even the fashion scene, to which he has continually cleaved, with a mixture of scorn and raucous glee. At *Vogue*, where the arrival of this strapping figure with his truncheon of lens must have struck the more delicate habitués as almost medievally rude, Klein was also the pioneer of the long shot. He liked to stick himself at a distance, or even at rooftop level, and let his models roam the streets, so that no one else realized they were being snapped; in Rome, of course, the passersby assumed that the girls, in their pristine hats and coats, had to be high-class hookers, thus risking a minor riot, although what stays with you from the shoot is the zebra stripes of the road crossing, flattened by the telephoto into a patch of instant Jasper Johns. Even a road can be à la mode.

Klein is a one-man band, and it is hard to think of any instrument into which he has not tootled or brayed. Although the four great city books are all in black-and-white, he could convert to color without a hitch or a wince, especially when there was a ketchup-red coat to be shot beside a yellow cab. He would swipe the camera through long exposures and let off a flash in the middle, leaving a flare that, at first glance, could be mistaken for a battlefield; he would refocus the enlarger *as he printed*, causing the black tiles on a New York washroom wall to blur and breathe, like something at the ragged end of a dream. In April, 1955, both he and Robert Frank were sent to cover the same society event, Elsa Maxwell's Toy Ball, and the results bear lasting comparison. Frank's image, published in "The Americans," has a pearly wistfulness that fits the occasion, as if he himself were sporting a tuxedo; Klein's, a violent, semi-abstract haze, could have been taken by an intruder in bluejeans. ("Open at f/2. Fifteenth of a second . . . an eighth, one fourth, I didn't give a shit," he says. "That was really a night. I went to town.") Neither picture is a truer record than the other, and "The Americans," which came out in 1958, is like a sad, consumptive cousin to the hearty, sarcastic braggadocio of "Life Is Good and Good for You in New York." Frank was a native of Switzerland, quietly weighing a brave new world; Klein was back, for a while, where he belonged.

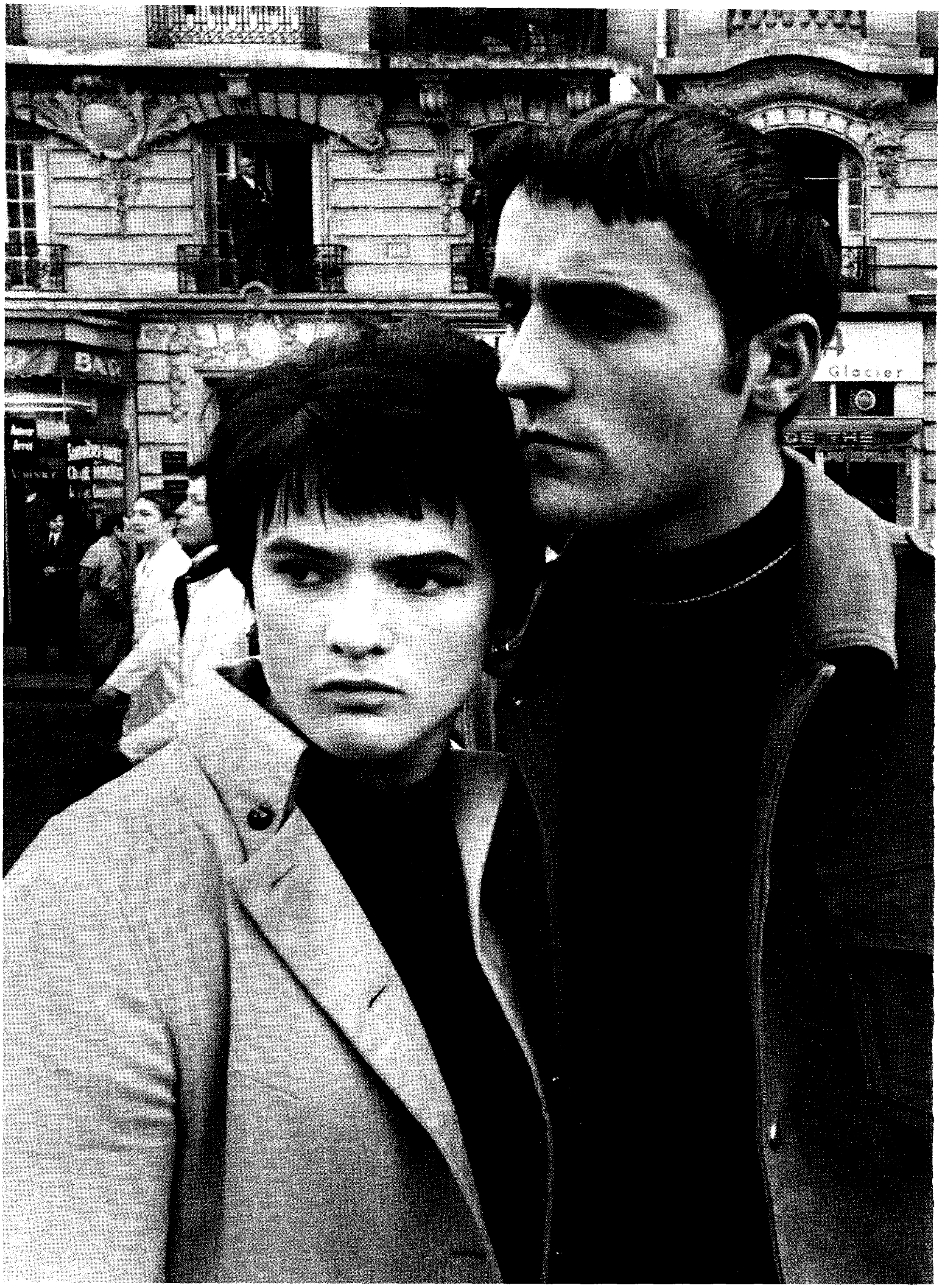
Just now it is Klein time in New York. Until June 9th, the Howard Greenberg Gallery, on Wooster Street, is running a formidable exhibit of Klein's work, including vintage prints from his city books; visitors will be able to catch such treasures as the fat, happy Roman seated beside a lithe classical sculpture, with a Vespa showing its own curves on the curb. Ancient and modern compete, and the honors are even. At the same time, the Charles Cowles Gallery is tracing a more recent departure, Klein's painted contact sheets. These are startling constructions: blown-up strips of negatives, bathed and looped in bright paint, as if the photographer, gambling on the standoff between chance and control, wanted to up the stakes. The unavoidable lesson of all this work—old and new, old slamming into the side of the new—is that Klein is on a roll. Oh, and one other thing: his latest movie is coming out.

Klein has made more than twenty films. He began in 1958, with "Broadway by Light," and over the years he has turned his hand to such scattered subjects as the French Open, Eldridge Cleaver, and Little Richard. In 1965, if you can believe it, he actually gave up photography for cinema, and didn't return to the fray until the start of the nineteen-eighties. It's not that the break wasn't therapeutic, or that the films weren't worth the effort; it's just that fifteen years on the wagon, for a man who seemed drunk on the frozen look of things, is a long haul. He had always felt the magnetism of a righteous cause—he spoke to me of heading down South in 1963, when he was "hassled by the police just for talking to a black person on the street"—and in 1967 he split from *Vogue*, where the fierceness of his political stance, especially his contribution to the portmanteau picture "Far from Vietnam," along with those of directors like Alain Resnais and Jean-Luc Godard, had ruffled fur and feathers. *Women's Wear Daily* ran the unusual headline "FAMOUS VOGUE PHOTOGRAPHER DOING ANTI-AMERICAN FILM," as if Klein's convictions were an insult to the rise of the hemline. There were other, more pleasing pressures on his time, as he casually recalls. "Louis Malle called me up one day and said, 'I would love you to co-direct "Zazie in the Métro." ' " On his own initiative, Klein went to introduce himself to Federico Fellini, who was staying at a Paris hotel. "I gave him a copy of my New York book, and he said, 'Oh, I already have a copy next to my bed. Look, why don't you come to Rome and be assistant director on "Nights of Cabiria"?' So I went."

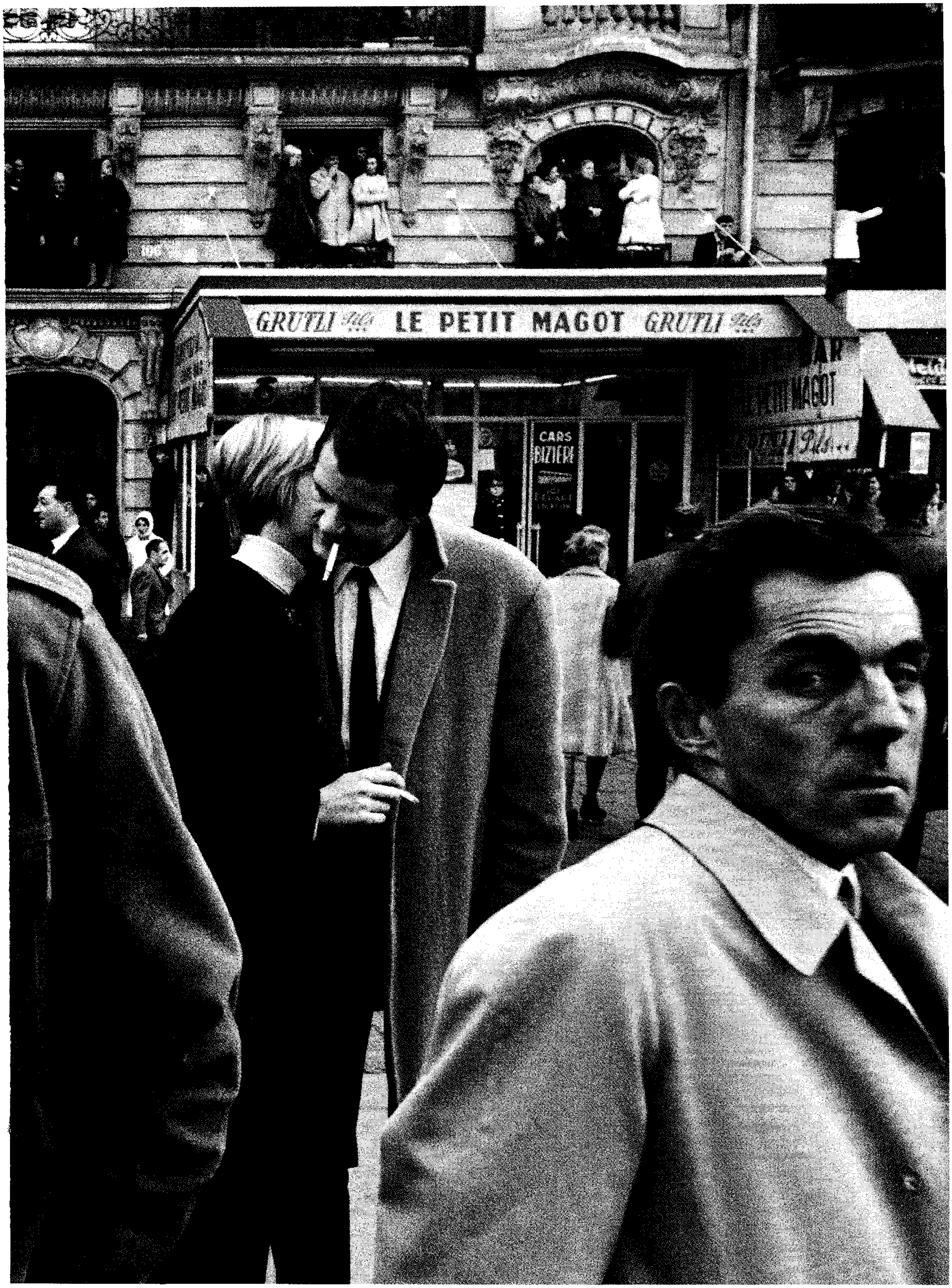
Most of Klein's own movies are documentaries, but there are digressions into fiction, too, as with his wicked poke at the fashion industry, "Who Are You, Polly Maggoo?" (1965-66), and "The Model Couple" (1975-76), in which a pair of humans are watched and measured like lab rats. It comes across as a cheaper, hipper "Clockwork Orange," with less pith and a lot more juice; there is no Klein movie, not even "Mister Freedom" (1967-68), an irate Expressionist broadside starring Donald Pleasence and Delphine Seyrig, that does not share the essential good humor of its creator. Not many people have seen this stuff, but you should at least try to track down Klein's two boxing pictures, "Cassius the Great" (1964-65) and its expanded reissue, "Muhammad Ali the Greatest" (1974), which adds footage of the Ali-Foreman rumble in Zaire. Klein is a fountain of opinion, but in Ali—"the heavyweight champion of *everything*"—he finally met his match. "You know what he called me?" Klein said in Paris recently. "He made a point of not knowing people's names, the way that white people used to call black people 'boy.' He knew I came from Europe, so he used to call me England. 'Hey, England!' It's the only place he knew of in Europe."

There's a great still of Klein watching his hero's triumphal procession from the ring in Miami after the Sonny Liston bout of 1964. On the flight down to Florida, he had sat next to Malcolm X, and now he was right there in the heart of the Clay camp: "Nowadays you wouldn't get five hundred yards away." The fight has not gone out of Klein, but I suspect that the world has grown too fenced and managed for his liking; certainly his new movie, "Messiah," has a restraint, almost a diffidence, that would have surprised the streetwise Klein of earlier years. "Messiah" takes Handel's score and carries it around the world; different sections are performed by different choirs—mainly by a professional outfit dressed in black, but also by prison inmates in Texas, who slap hands to congratulate themselves on making it through the tricky warbles of "For Unto Us a Child Is Born," and by the police choir of Dallas, with sirens flashing and the city's towers shining in the distance. There is a stream of visual wit here, but no sneering; everyone has his say, or his sing, and thus the original fire of the narrative is kindled afresh. It is the first truly Christian film I have seen in a long while; needless to say, only a Jewish American exile could have made it.

"Jewish kids are not supposed to be technically handy," Klein told me, hovering as usual between principle and jest. "If you want to talk about one of my theories, I think there are two kinds of photography—Jewish photography and goyish photography. If you look at modern photography, you find, on the



Armistice Day, 1968, in Paris, where Klein has lived since the end of the Second World War. You can read his picture like a novel, fores


GRUTLI Pils
LE PETIT MAGOT
GRUTLI Pils
BAR
LE PETIT MAGOT
GRUTLI Pils...
CARS
BIZIERE

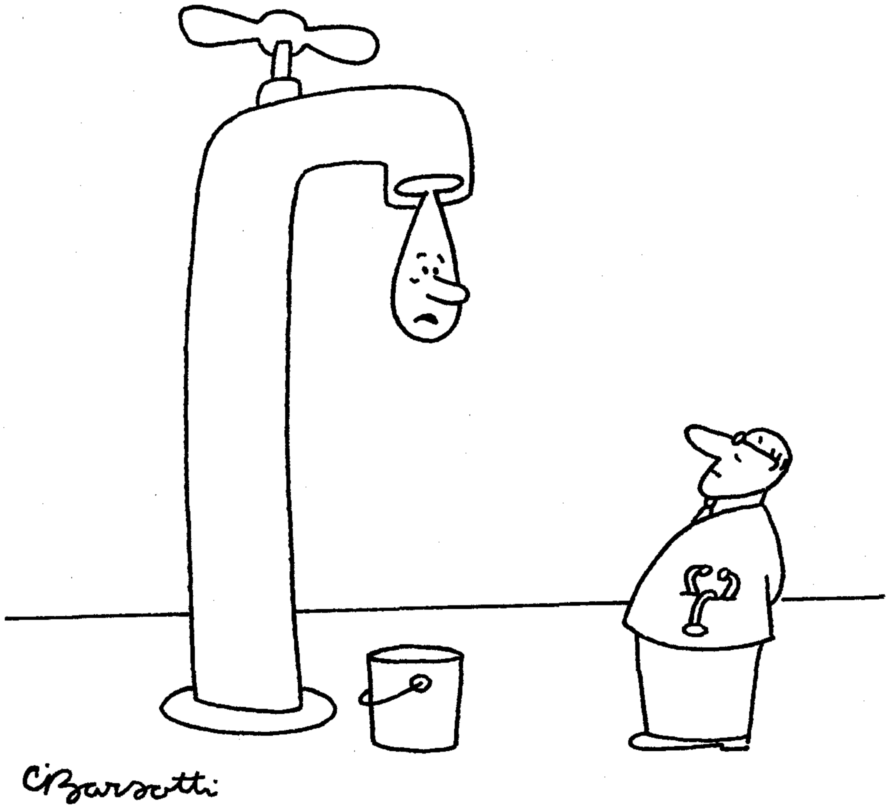
COURTESY HOWARD GREENBERG GALLERY

ith subplots, or you can chop it into abstract components and whittle it down to the thin white line of the lover's Gitane.

one hand, the Weegees, the Diane Arbuses, the Robert Franks—funky photographs. And then you have the people who go out in the woods. Ansel Adams, Weston. It's like black and white jazz." The theory is so contentious that you expect to find a whole army of exceptions, but the rule holds surprisingly firm. If anything, you want to send it out into the world of modern art and see how it fares. One of the few people keeping pace with "Life Is Good and Good for You in New York" was Robert Rauschenberg, who was putting together his first "combines" in 1954, at the same moment that Klein and Frank were branding American energies onto film. The bursting red surface of a typical combine, a grand abstraction made concrete by the addition of newsprint and metal and slivers of mirror, seems in retrospect less like a deliberate campaign of shock and more like a Kleinian refusal to exclude anything that caught the eye. Is it too fanciful to find something specifically Jewish in this comic-ironic embrace, this appetite that grew into a tolerance? Think of Saul Bellow: "The Adventures of Augie March," a wide-aperture book if ever there was one, had come out the year before.

When Klein came back to photography, in 1980, he found plenty to shoot. ("Of course, I never really stopped completely. Nobody does.") His published work of the last couple of decades, in books such as "Close Up" (1989), "In and Out of Fashion" (1994), and "Films" (1998), has been jumpier than ever, the camera so keen to get in your face that in some cases it's halfway up your nose. "In and Out of Fashion," for example, is a vibrant album of fads, freak shows, and the beautiful people, plus a handful of those determined to steal beauty for themselves. Read the captions at the back of the book: "Soho, London, 1980," "Fake Dolly Parton, Hollywood, 1985," "Gay Parade, Hollywood, 1980," "Oktoberfest, Munich, 1980."

These suggest a man doing homage to honest vulgarity, yet, unlike many of his peers, Klein never strays into the deeper vulgarity of passing sentence on what he observes. At the center of the Soho shot, for instance, we have a couple of punks: batwing eyeliner, a Mohican strip of rosy, matted hair as thin as a toothbrush. Klein was hardly alone in his appreciation of such exotica; by 1980, three years into the monarchy of punk, the process of domestication was well under way, and any London tourist could buy postcards of Sid Vicious clones to amuse the folks back home. What no one but Klein could see, or bothered to notice, is the figure standing on the left-hand verge of the frame: glasses, mustache, windbreaker, turtleneck sweater as beige as bread, one hand gripping a can of lager, and eyes glazing over at the Technicolor popinjays before him. Most photographers, and all fashion editors, would have cropped him out, embarrassed by his utter want of style—which is, of course, precisely why Klein counts him in. The man's presence is a rebuke not just to the loud, lunging fashion needs of the punks but also to our romantic notion that a country is defined by its convulsions; British social historians will mark down the late nineteen-seventies and early eighties as a period of high-energy change, whereas the truth is that most people, as is always the case all over the world, were content to watch these small explosions of revolt from the safety of the sidelines and carry on drinking their beer.



"How much time do I have, Doc?"

You can leaf through any of Klein's books, or scan his New York shows, and suddenly realize that what you are inspecting is less a sheaf of images—heaven knows, you can find those on any newsstand—than a sort of chemical reaction. Turn back a page from Soho and you find yourself in Clermont-Ferrand, with a bevy of priests resplendent in caps and capes. Your eye is drawn at once to the elaborate geometry of their lace sleeves; frankly, the fathers put the punks to shame, though whether that makes the picture irreverent, pious, or plain funny is hard to decide. The curse of photography books is to be left in artless array on coffee tables, as talismans of our taste; and it is the duty of William Klein to disturb that peace. Why else would he keep reproducing his contact sheets, which resemble nothing so much as clips of abandoned movies, if not to demonstrate the tide of life that flowed on either side of his chosen snap? He doesn't want your friends to leaf idly through "Life Is Good and Good for You in New York" while discussing schools or tickets for the Met; he wants your friends to pick it up, flinch, and

RUNWAY

We crawled out of the car
into the rest stop. Lady Baltimore cake
was served by Mme. du Barry look-alikes.
"Don't hurry, Mr. Executioner," one chirped,
pressing the unwanted crumbs against my lips.
"It'll all be over in a second," she added encouragingly.

Red Skelton asked me if I had a book coming out. He seemed drowned
in lists of trivia and itching-powder dreams—
you know, the kind that make you wake up
and then sort of fall back into sleep again.
His brother was cleaning up after the elephants. He
wore a crisp white uniform. Could have been a soda jerk,
or just a jerk. My scented glove offends
the daintiest among them, for they have no recourse
but cries of old London—an exhaustive repertory,
one first thought, but soon its coda reared—
a clutch of mordant shrieks.

I supposed it was the witching hour.
Nothing unusual happened. Soon we were leaving home
forever, to be pitched about on storm-tossed seas,
flagrant to be back amid multiple directions. For though there are some
who can live without compasses, it dissolves all complexity
if one is perpetually in the know. Sleep, directions—that's all
I need at my chaste fireside, to take in the sights,
just as the wind starts and darkness longs
to take us down a peg.

—*John Ashbery*

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wish they had worn oven mitts. He wants them to wonder if life is still good, and whether, to their secret annoyance, it might once have been better. In the Charles Cowles show, one of the most famous New York images—a kid pointing a toy gun at the camera, the barrel out of focus and a mock-mean snarl on his face—is splashed with paint the color of movie blood. You look at it and think: These days, forty-six years on, the gun would not be a toy.

Maybe the best is yet to come. Down in Montparnasse, a ten-minute drive from his apartment, Klein has a small complex of studios on either side of a mews; there he showed me the proofs of a book, as thick as a shoebox, tentatively titled "KLEIN + PARIS." It is due out in March of next year, and if it honors his abrasive devotion to the place, it should be quite an event. He once made a documentary about the rebellious spring of 1968, "Maydays," but I have seen single Klein photographs of Paris that are themselves movielike in their tense and thronging dynamic. Look at the one reproduced here: a landscape format hung with portraits. In the foreground, there is the leading couple—well matched, though too cool and frowning to give off discernible signs of love. Then, there are the supporting players: the second-string sweethearts, the woman whispering in the man's ear; funereal groupings on the far balconies, perched as precariously as pigeons; the hit man at the far right, a trenchcoated Charles Aznavour figure who knows too much. You can read the picture like a novel, forested with subplots; or you can chop it into abstract components and whittle it down to the thin white line of the lover's Gitane; or you can play the historian and ponder the fact that it was taken in 1968—during Armistice Day ("probably the last armistice for de Gaulle's regime," Klein writes in a note) rather than the delirium of May, although you can't help feeling a hangover of unrest. Are these citizens watching the parade, or has it already gone by?

"A lot of French people resent me," Klein says. "I'm still considered a foreigner." But it is equally hard to imagine so peregrine a spirit ever settling again in America; his achievements, closer to those of a war reporter than to the homelier virtues of someone like Cartier-Bresson, are those of a man who belongs and does not belong. "I'm such a loner," he told me. "My dream always, when I was a kid, was Cézanne, who nobody paid attention to, who was out in the fucking country. He was there, painting his fucking mountain, day in, day out, and that's the sort of life I lead." Yet Klein is so naturally given to the dramatic gesture that he is never going to be one of life's invisible men. Spending a few hours in his company is like hanging out with Tristram Shandy. Even the prose that accompanies his photographs, when he supplies it, bears the reek of the flashlight and the front page. Here is Klein at Madison Square Garden, in 1989, watching the Knicks play the Phoenix Suns. Five minutes to go: "Time out. The sweaty supermen, heads hanging, cluster around the coach, half their size, sharp in a grey business suit and in a very bad mood. You're surrendering, he rasps. What's the matter, you gonna give it to them? Hell no. Boom. Ten points in two minutes. Ewing gets forty for the game. The Suns go out. The Garden goes wild. Whaddya mean."

Now turn to the shot he took that night. Not a glimpse of the court; he was too busy facing the other way, drinking in the crowd. No supermen to be seen; just a cross-section of ordinary men and women, hands in a blur of applause, fists in mid-pump. William Klein's big moment was theirs, too. Whaddya expect. Fifty years in the business, and curiosity is still driving the cat. ♦

FICTION

A VILLAGE AFTER DARK

BY KAZUO ISHIGURO

There was a time when I could travel England for weeks on end and remain at my sharpest—when, if anything, the travelling gave me an edge. But now that I am older I become disoriented more easily. So it was that on arriving at the village just after dark I failed to find my bearings at all. I could hardly believe I was in the same village in which not so long ago I had lived and come to exercise such influence.

There was nothing I recognized, and I found myself walking forever around twisting, badly lit streets hemmed in on both sides by the little stone cottages characteristic of the area. The streets often became so narrow I could make no progress without my bag or my elbow scraping one rough wall or another. I persevered nevertheless, stumbling around in the darkness in the hope of coming upon the village square—where I could at least orient myself—or else of encountering one of the villagers. When after a while I had done neither, a weariness came over me, and I decided my best course was just to choose a cottage at random, knock on the door, and hope it would be opened by someone who remembered me.

I stopped by a particularly rickety-looking door, whose upper beam was so low that I could see I would have to crouch right down to enter. A dim light was leaking out around the door's edges, and I could hear voices and laughter. I knocked loudly to insure that the occupants would hear me over their talk. But just then someone behind me said, "Hello."

I turned to find a young woman of around twenty, dressed in raggedy jeans and a torn jumper, standing in the darkness a little way away.

"You walked straight past me earlier," she said, "even though I called to you."

"Did I really? Well, I'm sorry. I didn't mean to be rude."

"You're Fletcher, aren't you?"

"Yes," I said, somewhat flattered.

"Wendy thought it was you when you went by our cottage. We all got very excited. You were one of that lot, weren't you? With David Maggis and all of them."

"Yes," I said, "but Maggis was hardly the most important one. I'm surprised you pick him out like that. There were other, far more important figures." I reeled off a series of names and was in-

SERGIO LARRAIN/MAGNUM

terested to see the girl nodding at each one in recognition. "But this must have all been before your time," I said. "I'm surprised you know about such things."

"It was before our time, but we're all experts on your lot. We know more about all that than most of the older ones who were here then. Wendy recognized you instantly just from your photos."

"I had no idea you young people had taken such an interest in us. I'm sorry I walked past you earlier. But you see, now that I'm older, I get a little disoriented when I travel."

I could hear some boisterous talk coming from behind the door. I banged on it again, this time rather impatiently, though I was not so eager to bring the encounter with the girl to a close.

She looked at me for a moment, then said, "All of you from those days are like that. David Maggis came here a few years ago. In '93, or maybe it was '94. He was like that. A bit vague. It must get to you after a while, travelling all the time."

"So Maggis was here. How interesting. You know, he wasn't one of the really important figures. You mustn't get carried away with such an idea. Incidentally, perhaps you could tell me who lives in this cottage." I thumped the door again.

"The Petersons," the girl said. "They're an old house. They'll probably remember you."

"The Petersons," I repeated, but the name meant nothing to me.

"Why don't you come to our cottage? Wendy was really excited. So were the rest of us. It's a real chance for us, actually talking to someone from those days."

"I'd very much like to do that. But first of all I'd better get myself settled in. The Petersons, you say."

I thumped the door again, this time quite ferociously. At last it opened, throwing warmth and light out into the street. An old man was standing in the doorway. He looked at me carefully, then asked, "It's not Fletcher, is it?"

"Yes, and I've just got into the village. I've been travelling for several days."

He thought about this for a moment, then said, "Well, you'd better come in."

I found myself in a cramped, untidy room full of rough wood and broken furniture. A log burning in the fireplace was the only source of light, by which I could make out a number of hunched figures sitting around the room. The old man led me to a chair beside the fire with a grudgingness that suggested it was the very one he had just vacated. Once I sat down, I found I could not easily turn my head to see my surroundings or the others in the room. But the warmth of the fire was very welcome, and for a moment I just stared into its flames, a pleasant grogginess drifting over me. Voices came from behind me, inquiring if I was well, if I had come far, if I was hungry, and I replied as best I could, though I was aware that my answers were barely adequate. Eventually, the questions ceased, and it occurred to me that my presence was creating a heavy awkwardness, but I was so grateful for the warmth and the chance to rest that I hardly cared.

Nonetheless, when the silence behind me had gone unbroken for several minutes, I resolved to address my hosts with a little more civility, and I turned in my chair. It was then, as I did so, that I was suddenly seized by an intense sense of recognition. I had chosen the cottage quite at random, but now I could see that it was none other than the very one in which I had spent my years in this village. My gaze moved immediately to the far corner—at this moment shrouded in darkness—to the spot that had been *my* corner, where once my mattress had been and where I had spent many tranquil hours browsing through books or conversing with whoever happened to drift in. On summer days, the windows, and often the door, were left open to allow a refreshing breeze to blow right through. Those were the days when the cottage was surrounded by open fields and there would come from outside the voices of my friends, lazing in the long grass, arguing over poetry or philosophy. These precious fragments of the past came back to me so powerfully that it was all I could do not to make straight for my old corner then and there.

Someone was speaking to me again, perhaps asking another question, but I hardly listened. Rising, I peered through the shadows into my corner, and could now make out a narrow bed, covered by an old curtain, occupying more or less the exact space where my mattress had been. The bed looked extremely inviting, and I found myself cutting into something the old man was saying.

"Look," I said, "I know this is a bit blunt. But, you see, I've come such a long way today. I really need to lie down, close my eyes, even if it's just for a few minutes. After that, I'm happy to talk all you like."

I could see the figures around the room shifting uneasily. Then a new voice said, rather sullenly, "Go ahead then. Have a nap. Don't mind us."

But I was already picking my way through the clutter toward my corner. The bed felt damp, and the springs creaked under my weight, but no sooner had I curled up with my back to the room than my many hours of travelling began to catch up with me. As I was drifting off, I heard the old man saying, "It's Fletcher, all right. God, he's aged."

A woman's voice said, "Should we let him go to sleep like that? He might wake in a few hours and then we'll have to stay up with him."

"Let him sleep for an hour or so," someone else said. "If he's still asleep after an hour, we'll wake him."

At this point, sheer exhaustion overtook me.

It was not a continuous or comfortable sleep. I drifted between sleep and waking, always conscious of voices behind me in the room. At some point, I was aware of a woman saying, "I don't know how I was ever under his spell. He looks such a ragamuffin now."

In my state of near-sleep, I debated with myself whether these words applied to me or, perhaps, to David Maggis, but before long sleep engulfed me once more.

When I next awoke, the room appeared to have grown both darker and colder. Voices were continuing behind me in lowered tones, but I could make no sense of the conversation. I now felt embarrassed at having gone to sleep in the way I had, and for a few further moments remained motionless with my face to the wall. But something about me must have revealed that I was awake, for a woman's voice, breaking off from the general conversation, said, "Oh, look, look." Some whispers were exchanged, then I heard the sound of someone coming toward my corner. I felt a hand placed gently on my shoulder, and looked up to find a woman kneeling over me. I did not turn my body sufficiently to see the room, but I got the impression that it was lit by dying embers, and the woman's face was visible only in shadow.

"Now, Fletcher," she said. "It's time we had a talk. I've waited a long time for you to come back. I've thought about you often."

I strained to see her more clearly. She was somewhere in her forties, and even in the gloom I noticed a sleepy sadness in her eyes. But her face failed to stir in me even the faintest of memories.

"I'm sorry," I said. "I have no recollection of you. But please forgive me if we met some time ago. I do get very disoriented these days."

"Fletcher," she said, "when we used to know one another, I was young and beautiful. I idolized you, and everything you said seemed like an answer. Now here you are, back again. I've wanted to tell you for many years that you ruined my life."

"You're being unfair. All right, I was mistaken about a lot of things. But I never claimed to have any answers. All I said in those days was that it was our duty, all of us, to contribute to the debate. We knew so much more about the issues than the ordinary people here. If people like us procrastinated, claiming we didn't yet know enough, then who was there to act? But I never claimed I had the answers. No, you're being unfair."

"Fletcher," she said, and her voice was oddly gentle, "you used to make love to me, more or less every time I wandered in here to your room. In this corner, we did all kinds of beautifully dirty things. It's odd to think how I could have once been so physically excited by you. And here you're just a foul-smelling bundle of rags now. But look at me—I'm still attractive. My face has got a bit lined, but when I walk in the village streets I wear dresses I've made specially to show off my figure. A lot of men want me still. But you, no woman would look at you now. A bundle of stinking rags and flesh."

"I don't remember you," I said. "And I've no time for sex these days. I've other things to worry about. More serious things. Very well, I was mistaken about a lot in those days. But I've done more than most to try and make amends. You see, even now I'm travelling. I've never stopped. I've travelled and travelled trying to undo what damage I may once have caused. That's more than can be said of some others from those days. I bet Maggis, for instance, hasn't worked nearly as hard to try and put things right."

The woman was stroking my hair.

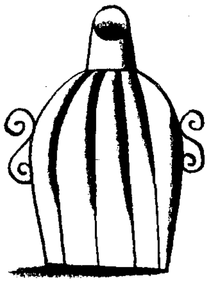
"Look at you. I used to do this, run my fingers through your hair. Look at this filthy mess. I'm sure you're contaminated with all sorts of parasites." But she continued slowly to run her fingers through the dirty knots. I failed to feel anything erotic from this, as perhaps she wished me to do. Rather, her caresses felt maternal. Indeed, for a moment it was as though I had finally reached some cocoon of protectiveness, and I began once more to feel sleepy. But suddenly she stopped and slapped me hard on the forehead.

"Why don't you join the rest of us now? You've had your sleep. You've got a lot of explaining to do." With that she got up and left.

For the first time, I turned my body sufficiently to survey the room. I saw the woman making her way past the clutter on the floor, then sitting down in a rocking chair by the fireplace. I could see three other figures hunched around the dying fire. One I recognized to be the old man who had opened the door. The two others—sitting together on what looked like a wooden trunk—seemed to be women of around the same age as the one who had spoken to me.

The old man noticed that I had turned, and he indicated to the others that I was watching. The four of them proceeded to sit stiffly, not speaking. From the way they did this, it was clear that they had been discussing me thoroughly while I was asleep. In fact, as I watched them I could more or less guess the whole shape their conversation had taken. I could see, for instance, that they had spent some time expressing concern for the young girl I had met outside, and about the effect I might have on her peers.

"They're all so impressionable," the old man would have said. "And I heard her inviting him to visit them."



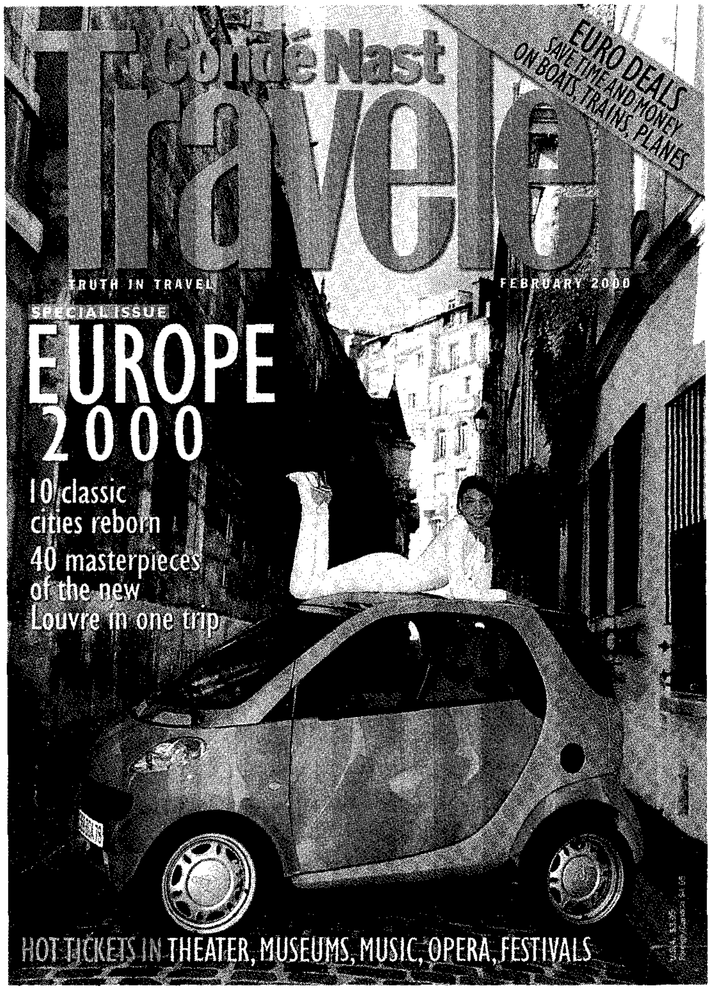
To which, no doubt, one of the women on the trunk would have said, "But he can't do much harm now. In our time, we were all taken in because all his kind—they were young and glamorous. But these days the odd one passing through from time to time, looking all decrepit and burned out like that—if anything, it goes to demystify all that talk about the old days. In any case, people like him have changed their position so much these days. They don't know themselves what they believe."

The old man would have shaken his head. "I saw the way that young girl was looking at him. All right, he looks a pitiful mess over there just now. But once his ego's fed a little, once he has the flattery of the young people, sees how they want to hear his ideas, then there'll be no stopping him. It'll be just like before. He'll have them all working for his causes. Young girls like that, there's so little for them to believe in now. Even a stinking tramp like this could give them a purpose."

Their conversation, all the time I slept, would have gone something very much like that. But now, as I observed them from my corner, they continued to sit in guilty silence, staring at the last of their fire. After a while, I rose to my feet. Absurdly, the four of them kept their gazes averted from me. I waited a few moments to see if any of them would say anything. Finally, I said, "All right, I was asleep earlier, but I've guessed what you were saying. Well, you'll be interested to know I'm going to do the very thing you feared. I'm going this moment to the young people's cottage. I'm going to tell them what to do with all their energy, all their dreams, their urge to achieve something of lasting good in this world. Look at you, what a pathetic bunch. Crouching in your cottage, afraid to do anything, afraid of me, of Maggis, of anyone else from those times. Afraid to do anything in the world out there, just because once we made a few mistakes. Well, those young people haven't yet sunk so low, despite all the lethargy you've been preaching at them down the years. I'll talk to them. I'll undo in half an hour all of your sorry efforts."

"You see," the old man said to the others. "I knew it would be this way. We

PURE PLEASURE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ought to stop him, but what can we do?"

I crashed my way across the room, picked up my bag, and went out into the night.

The girl was still standing outside when I emerged. She seemed to be expecting me and with a nod began to lead the way.

The night was drizzly and dark. We twisted and turned along the narrow paths that ran between the cottages. Some of the cottages we passed looked so decayed and crumbling that I felt I could destroy one of them simply by running at it with all my weight.

The girl kept a few paces ahead, occasionally glancing back at me over her shoulder. Once she said, "Wendy's going to be so pleased. She was sure it was you when you went past earlier. By now, she'll have guessed she was right, because I've been away this long, and she'll have brought the whole crowd together. They'll all be waiting."

"Did you give David Maggis this sort of reception, too?"

"Oh, yes. We were really excited when he came."

"I'm sure he found that very gratifying. He always had an exaggerated sense of his own importance."

"Wendy says Maggis was one of the interesting ones, but that you were, well, important. She thinks you were really important."

I thought about this for a moment. "You know," I said, "I've changed my mind on very many things. If Wendy's expecting me to say all the things I used to all those years ago, well, she's going to be in for a disappointment."

The girl did not seem to hear this, but continued to lead me purposefully through the clusters of cottages.

After a little while, I became aware of footsteps following a dozen or so paces behind us. At first, I assumed this was just some villager out walking and refrained from turning round. But then the girl halted under a street lamp and looked behind us. I was thus obliged also to stop and turn. A middle-aged man in a dark overcoat was coming toward us. As he approached, he held out his hand and shook mine, though without smiling.

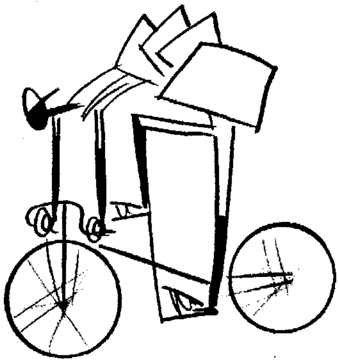
"So," he said, "you're here."

I then realized I knew the man. We had not seen each other since we were ten years old. His name was Roger Button, and he had been in my class at the school I had attended for two years in Canada before my family returned to England. Roger Button and I had not been especially close, but, because he had been a timid boy, and because he, too, was from England, he had for a while followed me about. I had neither seen nor heard from him since that time. Now, as I studied his appearance under the street lamp, I saw the years had not been kind to him. He was bald, his face was pocked and lined, and there was a weary sag to his whole posture. For all that, there was no mistaking my old classmate.

"Roger," I said, "I'm just on my way to visit this young lady's friends. They've gathered together to receive me. Otherwise I'd have come and looked you up straightaway. As it was, I had it in my mind as the next thing to do, even before getting any sleep tonight. I was just thinking to myself, However late things finish at the young people's cottage, I'll go and knock on Roger's door afterward."

"Don't worry," said Roger Button as we all started to walk again. "I know how busy you are. But we ought to talk. Chew over old times. When you last saw me—at school, I mean—I suppose I was a rather feeble specimen. But, you know, that all changed when I got to fourteen, fifteen. I really toughened up. Became quite a leader type. But you'd long since left Canada. I always wondered what would have happened if we'd come across each other at fifteen. Things would have been rather different between us, I assure you."

As he said this, memories came flooding back. In those days, Roger Button had idolized me, and in return I had bullied him incessantly. However, there had existed between us a curious understanding that my bullying him was all for his own good; that when, without warning, I suddenly punched him in the stomach on the playground, or when, passing him in the corridor, I impulsively wrenched his arm up his back until he started to cry, I was doing so in order to help him toughen up. Accordingly, the principal effect such attacks had on our relationship was to keep him in awe of me. This all came back to me as I listened to the weary-looking man walking beside me.



"Of course," Roger Button went on, perhaps guessing my train of thought, "it might well be that if you hadn't treated me the way you did I'd never have become what I did at fifteen. In any case, I've often wondered how it would have been if we'd met just a few years later. I really was something to be reckoned with by then."

We were once again walking along the narrow twisted passages between cottages. The girl was still leading the way, but she was now walking much faster. Often we would only just manage to catch a glimpse of her turning some corner ahead of us, and it struck me that we would have to keep alert if we were not to lose her.

"Today, of course," Roger Button was saying, "I've let myself go a bit. But I have to say, old fellow, you seem to be in much worse shape. Compared with you, I'm an athlete. Not to put too fine a point on it, you're just a filthy old tramp now, really, aren't you? But, you know, for a long time after you left I continued to idolize you. Would Fletcher do this? What would Fletcher think if he saw me doing that? Oh, yes. It was only when I got to fifteen or so that I looked back on it all and saw through you. Then I was very angry, of course. Even now, I still think about it sometimes. I look back and think, Well, he was just a thoroughly nasty so-and-so. He had a little more weight and muscle at that age than I did, a little more confidence, and he took full advantage. Yes, it's very clear, looking back, what a nasty little person you were. Of course, I'm not implying you still are today. We all change. That much I'm willing to accept."

"Have you been living here long?" I asked, wishing to change the subject.

"Oh, seven years or so. Of course, they talk about you a lot around here. I sometimes tell them about our early as-

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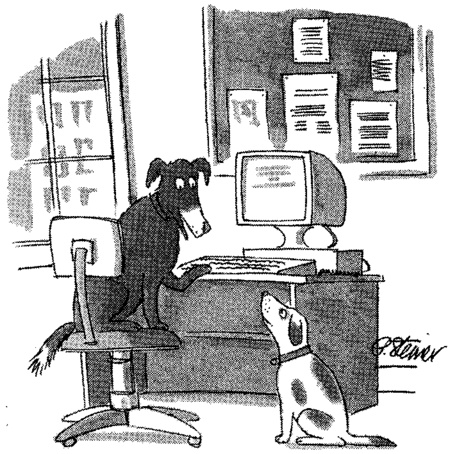

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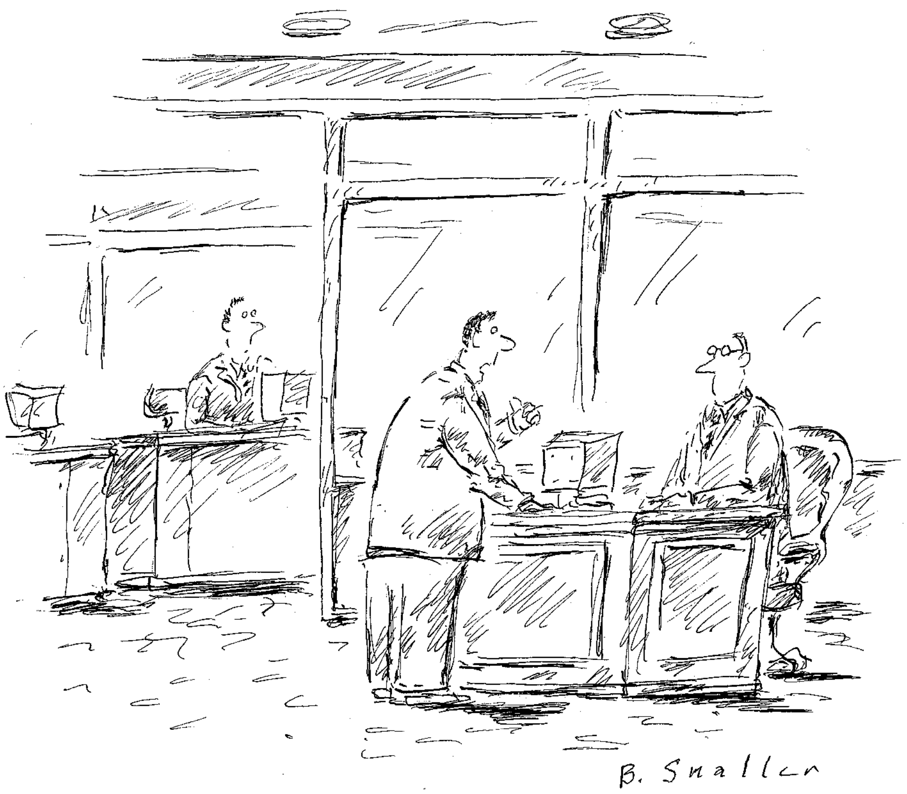

"O.K., if you can't see your way to giving me a pay raise, how about giving Parkerson a pay cut?"

sociation. 'But he won't remember me,' I always tell them. 'Why would he remember a skinny little boy he used to bully and have at his beck and call?' Anyway, the young people here, they talk about you more and more these days. Certainly, the ones who've never seen you tend to idealize you the most. I suppose you've come back to capitalize on all that. Still, I shouldn't blame you. You're entitled to try and salvage a little self-respect."

We suddenly found ourselves facing an open field, and we both halted. Glancing back, I saw that we had walked our way out of the village; the last of the cottages were some distance behind us. Just as I had feared, we had lost the young woman; in fact, I realized we had not been following her for some time.

At that moment, the moon emerged, and I saw we were standing at the edge of a vast grassy field—extending, I supposed, far beyond what I could see by the moon.

Roger Button turned to me. His face in the moonlight seemed gentle, almost affectionate.

"Still," he said, "it's time to forgive. You shouldn't keep worrying so much. As you see, certain things from the past will come back to you in the end. But then we can't be held accountable for what we did when we were very young."

"No doubt you're right," I said. Then I turned and looked around in the darkness. "But now I'm not sure where to go. You see, there were some young people waiting for me in their cottage. By now they'd have a warm fire ready for me and some hot tea. And some home-baked cakes, perhaps even a good stew. And the moment I entered, ushered in by that young lady we were following just now, they'd all have burst into applause. There'd be smiling, adoring faces all around me. That's what's waiting for me somewhere. Except I'm not sure where I should go."

Roger Button shrugged. "Don't worry, you'll get there easily enough. Except, you know, that girl was being a little misleading if she implied you could walk to Wendy's cottage. It's much too far. You'd really need to catch a bus. Even then, it's quite a long journey. About two hours, I'd say. But don't worry, I'll show you where you can pick up your bus."

With that, he began to walk back toward the cottages. As I followed, I could sense that the hour had got very late and my companion was anxious to get some sleep. We spent several minutes walking around the cottages again, and then he brought us out into the village square. In fact, it was so small and shabby it hardly merited being called a square; it was little more than a patch of green beside a solitary street lamp. Just visible beyond the pool of light cast by the lamp were a few shops, all shut up for the night. There was complete silence and nothing was stirring. A light mist was hovering over the ground.

Roger Button stopped before we had reached the green and pointed.

"There," he said. "If you stand there, a bus will come along. As I say, it's not a short journey. About two hours. But don't worry, I'm sure your young people will wait. They've so little else to believe in these days, you see."

"It's very late," I said. "Are you sure a bus will come?"

"Oh, yes. Of course, you may have to wait. But eventually a bus will come." Then he touched me reassuringly on the shoulder. "I can see it might get a little lonely standing out here. But once the bus arrives your spirits will rise, believe me. Oh, yes. That bus is always a joy. It'll be brightly lit up, and it's always full of cheerful people, laughing and joking and pointing out the window. Once you board it, you'll feel warm and comfortable, and the other passengers will chat with you, perhaps offer you things to eat or drink. There may even be singing—that depends on the driver. Some drivers encourage it, others don't. Well, Fletcher, it was good to see you."

We shook hands, then he turned and walked away. I watched him disappear into the darkness between two cottages.

I walked up to the green and put my bag down at the foot of the lamppost. I listened for the sound of a vehicle in the distance, but the night was utterly still. Nevertheless, I had been cheered by Roger Button's description of the bus. Moreover, I thought of the reception awaiting me at my journey's end—of the adoring faces of the young people—and felt the stirrings of optimism somewhere deep within me. ♦

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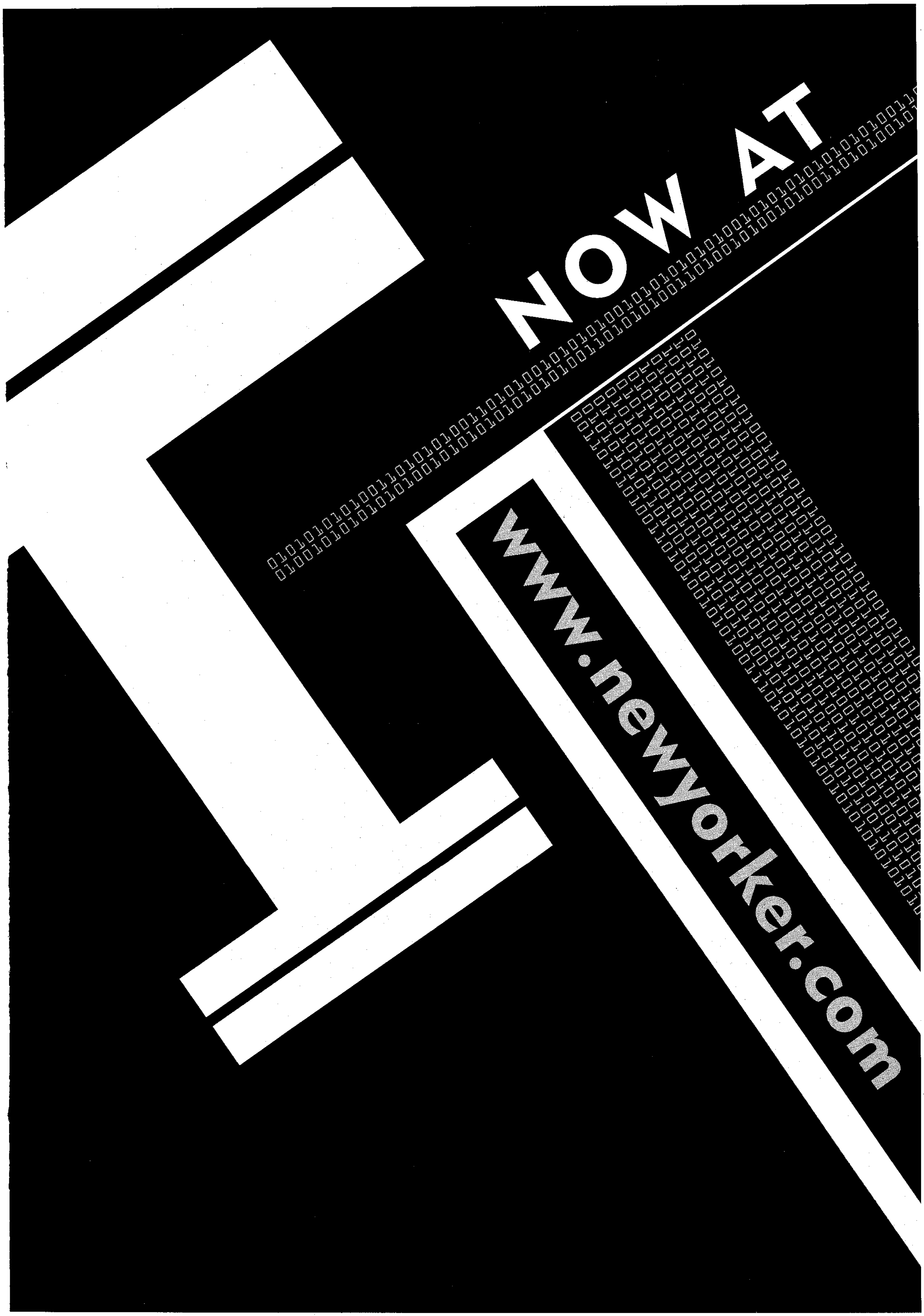
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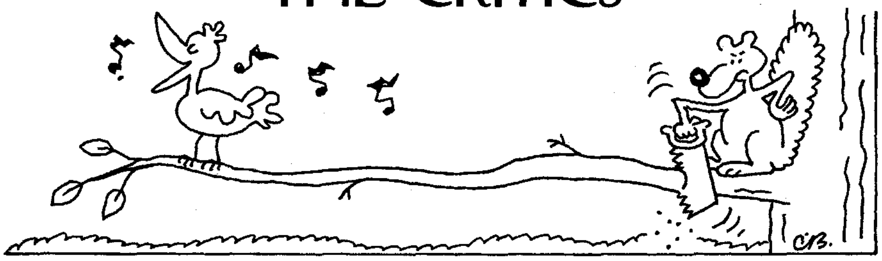


BOOKS

LAUGHING MAN

Moss Hart and the Broadway he co-created.

BY GARY GIDDINS

At the time of his death, in 1961, Moss Hart was one of Broadway's benevolent mandarins—admired, ubiquitous, well liked, and known far beyond Times Square, thanks to his movie scripts and television appearances, a marriage to the singer, actress, arts advocate, and game-show panelist Kitty Carlisle, and a best-selling memoir. As a playwright, director, producer, and play doctor, he had been indispensable to the theatre for thirty-one years, a tireless collaborator who reliably helped to mint the only currency Broadway trusts: hits. A showman above all, he was regarded by many as a comic genius—or half of one, in tandem with George S. Kaufman, another writer who required accomplices. In 1942, the Modern Library collected six of the nine plays they had written together, enshrining them in a series that also offered Wilde, Chekhov, and O'Neill. More recently, in 1956, Hart had shepherded the most fabled musical success of the postwar era, "My Fair Lady," and his 1959 account of his first twenty-six years, "Act One," had crowned the *Times* best-seller list for an astonishing twenty-two weeks. He was greatly mourned. And then largely forgotten.

Directorial brilliance in the theatre is evanescent, and Hart's plays, despite frequent and occasionally effective revivals, have been undermined by the very influence they exerted on subsequent writers for the stage, film, radio, and television. The cultural landscape is so thick with wisecracking dames, foppish egoists, idiot savants, batty relatives, and city slickers among the rubes that we are more inclined to pay homage to Kaufman and Hart for popularizing—indeed, practically inventing—those and other stock characters than to feel obliged to revisit the prototypes. "You Can't Take It with You," "The Man Who Came to Dinner," and "George Washington Slept Here" have achieved a churning immortality in amateur theatricals, but they have aged and are aging still.

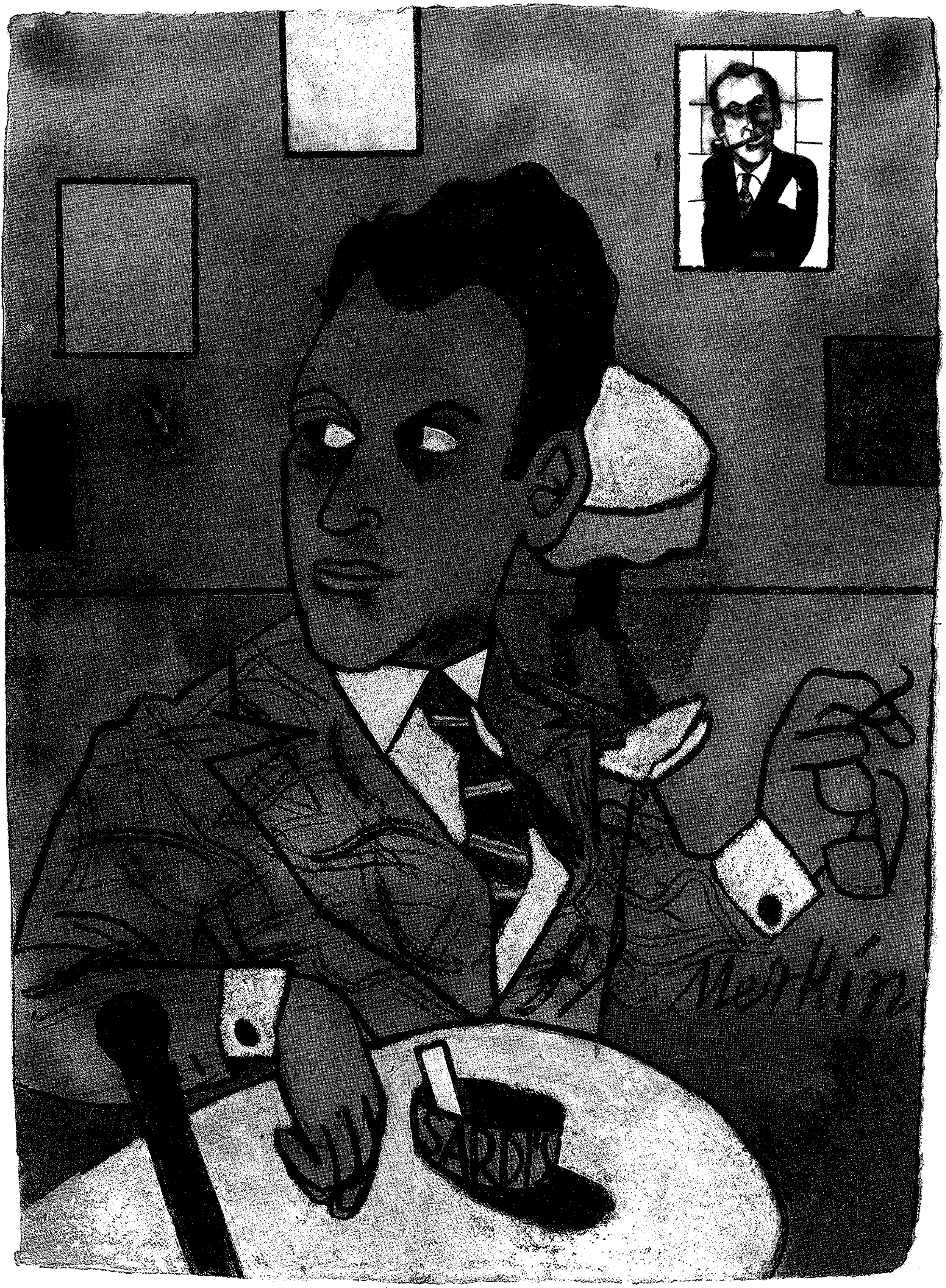
"Act One," which is still in print although reading it is no longer the rite of passage it once was, exercised an emotional hold on a generation of would-be writers. Here was the eternal theme, rife in the nineteen-fifties, of the alienated special child who escapes poverty and small-town (well, Bronx) provincialism in favor of a grander provincialism in the arts. As Hart described it, the theatre was a surrogate family of loving eccentrics, and playwriting was not a lonely vigil, beyond a few necessary all-nighters (at the beach), but, rather, a collaboration with other writers, actors, directors, producers, friends, kibbitzers, and even critics. Today, "Act One" seems overlong, a bit lofty, and evasive about details, but its fledgling epiphanies continue to echo:

> A week after I had written "The Curtain Slowly Falls," I went into the bathroom, locked the door, and settling myself with a pillow behind me in the empty bathtub, I opened the closely written pages. The play's awfulness did not dawn on me slowly—the full impact of its hackneyed dreariness hit me by the sixth page. I was hard put to finish it without getting out of the bathtub and flushing it down the toilet, and it was difficult by the second act for me to believe that I had written it at all.

Surprisingly, for forty years no one accepted the implicit cue in Hart's title to second-guess his recollections and add to them Acts Two and Three. This lapse was perhaps an indication of his diminished stature, though it is difficult to think of anyone more ideal for grounding a history of Broadway's golden era. In "Dazzler: The Life and Times of Moss Hart" (Knopf; $29.95), Steven Bach narrows his sights, which is a shame because, fixed on the man, he falls prey to the biographer's curse of personal disenchantment. Bach himself discovered Hart through "Act One," which brought "color and glow" to his "dreary" student days. He concludes his book with a paean to that memoir and its ability to capture "the yearning that theater can inspire, the sense of refuge from an otherwise inhospitable world it can provide." But he now knows that Hart was a troubled man, a revelation that inspires sarcasm where compassion would suffice; he is shocked to learn that Hart was occasionally a credit hog and probably bisexual. Yet he has marshalled most of the facts; when his story avoids the tone of petty irritation, it is fascinating.

Hart was born in 1904, to transplanted English Jews, and raised in what he described as "shabby gentility." His unusual name probably derives from dropping the "e" in Moses. His father, a cigar-maker, and his mother, who took in laundry, were meek, reticent, and distant. Any show of passion in their rattling apartment was triggered by Moss's grandfather, a garrulous tyrant, and Aunt Kate, who escaped cares and responsibilities by going to the theatre, often taking Moss with her. In "Act One," he describes her as a Blanche DuBois, a frivolous eccentric dependent on the kindness of relatives. Bach reveals that she grew dangerously mad, scrawling obscenities on walls and setting fires in theatres, and died many years after Hart said she did. But Hart had great affection for her, which Bach discounts, ominously suggesting, without explanation, that she "appropriated" Moss "in some unsettling way." In any event, he followed her into make-believe, and by the age of nineteen

RICHARD MERKIN


SARDI'S
Merkin

The cultural landscape is now thick with the wisecracking city slickers that Hart first popularized with George S. Kaufman.

he had sold a play about Oscar Wilde to a movie producer, who died before he could produce it.

Two years later, working as an office boy, Hart persuaded his boss, the second-string vaudeville producer Augustus Pitou, to mount a play he credited to a nonexistent friend. "The Hold-Up Man," retitled "The Beloved Bandit," toured the provinces but sank before reaching Broadway. Bach reports that Hart wrote it with Edward Eliscu (later famed for his song lyrics), though he did not acknowledge him then or, to Eliscu's dismay, in his memoir. For the next few years, Moss mastered various elements of stagecraft at summer resorts and with amateur groups, directing, writing, and acting in ambitious productions, from musicals to "The Emperor Jones." He idolized O'Neill, Chekhov, Ibsen, and Shaw, but conceded to Eliscu that "Merton of the Movies," by George Kaufman and Marc Connelly, "was more in their line." Then, in 1929, inspired by articles in *Variety*, he wrote "Once in a Lifetime," a three-act satire of the turmoil in Hollywood over talking pictures. Sam H. Harris agreed to produce it on the condition that Hart work on a revision with Kaufman, who dominated nineteen-twenties comedy to the degree that Eugene O'Neill dominated nineteen-twenties drama.

Beaumont and Fletcher notwithstanding, the theatre has usually been ruled by solitary writers who can and occasionally do decree absolute obeisance to every word and stage direction. But collaborations proliferated on Broadway as it developed its vaudeville pedigree into more sophisticated fare, and Kaufman favored teamwork to the point of compulsion. His idea of starting a play was to invite another writer over to exchange ideas. By the time the twenty-six-year-old Hart nervously telephoned him, Kaufman, then forty, had scored at least one hit every year from 1921 to 1929 (except for 1926, when he wrote with Herman Mankiewicz), in association with Marc Connelly, Edna Ferber, Ring Lardner, and Morrie Ryskind. "The Butter and Egg Man," which premièred in 1925, was the only success he would ever have on his own. In addition, he scored as a director, giving "The Front Page" its racehorse verve.

Broadway was in clover. As Bach notes, twenty-six theatres opened in New York between 1924 and 1929, bringing the total to ninety, which housed "an *average* of 225 new productions a year for the decade." Working with Kaufman, Hart soon realized that collaboration was a three-way process and that the key decisions were dictated by the third entity, the audience. The trial of nurturing "Once in a Lifetime" to its victorious opening is the centerpiece of "Act One"; some of that book's most memorable scenes describe Kaufman and the emulating Hart madly pacing behind the orchestra seats during out-of-town tryouts, concentrating less on their play than on the frequency, duration, and nature of the laughs it sparked or failed to spark. The audience's silence told them their third act was no good. Kaufman despaired of getting it right and decided to quit, but Hart won his confidence and salvaged the play by suggesting that they discard an elaborate, costly night-club scene and add a touch of romance.

"Just remember, it's O.K. to be guilty, but it's not O.K. to feel guilty."

Hart learned to monitor the responses of his customers as closely as a political candidate does a focus group. The Hollywood practice of re-editing movies to satisfy preview audiences has been much derided, yet Broadway's submission to human laugh meters in New Haven or Washington, D.C., has saved and undoubtedly improved countless comedies and musicals. The wisdom gleaned from audiences was not, however, cumulative. Playwriting "is not only the most difficult of literary forms to master," Hart augustly wrote, "but it is a craft one never seems to truly learn anything about from one's past mistakes." One thing he had to relearn frequently over three decades was the peril of employing flamboyant sets and stage gimmicks, which tended to dwarf the drama and inhibit the laughs.

Kaufman, for all his experience, bowed to Hart's appetite for teeming spectacle. They reached the peak of immoderation with the 1939 flag-waver "The American Way," which required sixty speaking roles and nearly two hundred townspeople, immigrants, children, soldiers, sailors, and policemen, as well as a Community Novelty Band. The immense scale did not strengthen the play's pious liberalism, which was conveyed more effectively and to more people that year by Earl Robinson's radio cantata "Ballad for Americans." Kaufman and Hart had been on firmer ground working within the constraints of their 1936 Pulitzer Prize-winning play, "You Can't Take It with You," though its single set and nineteen actors managed to accommodate two families, I.R.S. and F.B.I. men, a black servant and her beau, a White Russian dance teacher, and a depraved actress, not to mention fireworks, ballet, and xylophone solos. To Depression audiences, Grandpa Vanderhof and his eccentric family, which avows hobbies at the expense of humdrum work and has the resources to indulge them, struck a chord. Josephine Hull, who played Mrs. Sycamore, a happily muddled playwright and painter, eventually cornered the market in blithe eccentricity, taking on "Arsenic and Old Lace" and "Harvey," neither of which seems imaginable without the Kaufman and Hart precedent.

They did not invent sentimental nonconformity: Al Jolson had used it in "Hallelujah, I'm a Bum," in 1933, and Frank Capra, who went on to leach much of the charm out of "You Can't Take It with You," had already visited "Lost Horizon." But they imbued it with a defining warmth and structure. Bach convincingly argues that, as a rule, Hart was responsible for the warmth and Kaufman for the structure. Hart had a generosity of spirit that complemented Kaufman's acerbic wit, though neither was particularly good at drawing women. "Tenderness and sentimentality weren't in Kaufman's inventory," Bach notes, "and frank sexual attraction wasn't in Moss's." Yet the two of them, possibly inspired by Kaufman's friendship with Dorothy Parker or by Hart's recollections of Aunt Kate, gave birth to a type made emblematic by Eve Arden, whose voice one hears as early as "Once in a Lifetime," when the caustic May, a lone beacon of sanity, played by Jean Dixon, is faulted for not having rehearsed the ingénue in a certain scene:

> Jerry: May, what about the church steps? Susan says you didn't rehearse here.
>
> May: Susan, I know your memory isn't very good, but I want you to think way back to—Oh, pretty near five minutes ago. We were sitting in your dressing room—remember?—and we rehearsed that scene?
>
> Susan: But that isn't the scene he means.
>
> May: Outside the church, is that right? . . .
>
> Susan: Outside the church—Oh, yes, we did *that!* You said the church steps. . . .
>
> May: Susan—we feel that it's time you were told this. Outside the church and the church steps are really the same scene.
>
> Susan: Are they?
>
> May: Yes. In practically all churches now they put the steps on the outside.

In Kaufman and Hart's second play, "Merrily We Roll Along" (1934), the pungent May morphed into Julia, a once idealistic writer who becomes, in her own words, a drunk and a whore. But in "You Can't Take It with You" a word-association game Mrs. Sycamore imposes on Kirby, the puffed-up businessman, and his wife provides one of the funniest scenes in the play, and one of the few sympathetic insights into women in a body of work that aches with misogyny. Hart, who was addicted to psychiatry, almost certainly came up with it. Asked for one-word responses to "lust" and "sex," Mrs. Kirby says "human" (her husband says "unlawful") and "Wall Street" (her husband says "male"). More typical is the brief appearance of Gay Wellington, who is described in the stage directions as "an actress, a nymphomaniac, and a terrible souse." Kaufman, one suspects, supplied the few political gibes, notably Kirby's accusation that Grandpa's live-and-let-live philosophy is "un-American" and "downright Communistic."

Bach chides Hart for writing "dismayingly little that expressed any political viewpoint more profound or nuanced than Tin Pan Alley or Hallmark." He makes occasional cracks about Hart's failure to measure up to O'Neill and the rest of his early idols, which is a bit like attacking a chocolate soufflé for not being Chateaubriand. Yet Hart and Kaufman also worried, briefly, about whether comedy fully tested their mettle, and they dithered with some candor on the subject in the perennially futile, flawed, difficult to produce (it calls for a cast of ninety-five), and frequently riveting "Merrily We Roll Along." This is the play that begins at an opening-night party with the playwright's star and lover being blinded by his wife, who was formerly his star and lover, a circumstance that had driven her first husband to suicide, as we learn in a progression of scenes that recede chronologically to show how the principals sacrificed their principles for fame and fortune. Best known for its time-reversal device, employed more effectively by Harold Pinter in "Betrayal," "Merrily We Roll Along" might have played more powerfully in straight time, kicking off with the callow invocation of Polonius at a college graduation and ending with the stunning violence of the party.

Even so, the play is impossible. The antihero, Richard Niles, is berated for writing plays about which his most damning critic gripes, "I liked it; I laughed. And by the time I got to Broadway and Forty-fifth Street I'd forgotten all about it." Kaufman and Hart portray Niles as grasping, deceitful, and corrupt, yet go to great lengths to justify him, ultimately shifting the blame for his descent into prosperity to the women in his life. Still, the hand-wringing has an autobiographical bite. Amid much name-dropping and several thinly disguised portraits, they include a colloquy that barely disguises themselves:

> Richard: Thank you, David. You'll have your own hits pretty soon.
>
> David: I hope so. But I'm never going to forget what I owe to Richard Niles. I'd have given up after the first one, if it hadn't been for you.
>
> Richard: The first failure doesn't mean anything. You've got stuff. Just go right ahead and don't listen to anybody. Not even me.
>
> David: Well, on *my* fortieth birthday, if I'm where you are, I'm going to be a pretty happy man.

At forty, Hart was at least as far along in his career as Kaufman had been in his when they first met, though according to Bach he was happy only on the up-curve of a manic-depressive cycle. Hart was in thrall to his therapists, whom Bach portrays as fame-seeking quacks. He writes that "once or twice a day" Hart saw Dr. Lawrence Kubie, who believed in "curing" homosexuals. Kitty Carlisle, who declined to speak with Bach, tells of asking Dr. Kubie for sedatives to counter Hart's insomnia and being refused because pills would "mask his symptoms." In 1941, working with Kurt Weill and Ira Gershwin, Hart brought analysis to the stage for the first time, in the charmingly dated musical "Lady in the Dark," which made a star of Danny Kaye (Hart later wrote one of Kaye's most durable movies, "Hans Christian Andersen"), whose electric scene-stealing inspired the difficult and competitive Gertrude Lawrence to outdo him and herself as she sashayed through "The Saga of Jenny." "Lady in the Dark" remains one of only a handful of classic American musicals not adapted from history or works in other idioms. In addition to the uncanny standard "My Ship," the comic novelty "Tschaikowsky" (Kaye raced through the names of forty-nine Russian composers in well under a minute), and an analytical cure by the final curtain, it offers a distinctly modern structure, beginning without an overture, in a psychiatrist's office, and unfolding through four spectral dream sequences.

Hart went on to direct such light comedies as "Junior Miss" and "Dear Ruth" (a substantial wartime hit), and to write and direct the 1943 Air Force pageant "Winged Victory." Three years had passed since he last worked with Kaufman; the collaboration was over. Bach writes, "Their separation seemed to many on Broadway to spell the end of an era," which is unlikely, as they never arrived at a formal break. Kaufman went on to work with Edna Ferber and Howard Teichmann, among others, yet his great days were past, and so, at least as a playwright, were Hart's. He wrote a few prominent movies—"Gentleman's Agreement" and the Judy Garland remake of "A Star Is Born"—and took a fleeting turn on TV (an episode Bach omits), emceeing a Sunday-evening quiz show, "Answer Yes or No," in 1950, and preparing a telecast that same year of "You Can't Take It with You," to inaugurate the "Pulitzer Prize Playhouse." By then, he had married Kitty Carlisle and they had two children. Meanwhile, his plays wrestled with the dilemma outlined in "Merrily We Roll Along," as he attempted to reconcile art with commerce and invariably compromised both. Only his backstage comedy, "Light Up the Sky" (1948), has enjoyed significant revivals.

In 1954, Hart suffered a heart attack, but bounced back as the initially reluctant director of Lerner and Loewe's musical version of Shaw's "Pygmalion," a project that Oscar Hammerstein had confidently told Alan Jay Lerner could not be done. The story of "My Fair Lady" and its far less exalted follow-up, "Camelot," brings Bach to life as well. With Hart offstage for much of the tale, he puts aside the superior tone ("He puffed on the pipe he had lately taken up, so much more writerly than a cigar"), the forced witticisms (a Hollywood populated with Broadway types is "Sardi's with bougainvillea"), the disparaging asides (Hart "dug himself into a foxhole in Bucks County"), and the puns ("This Hart's beat was Broadway") to vividly recount the battle-scarred road from Mrs. Patrick Campbell's Eliza in 1914 to Julie Andrews's unexpected 1956 triumph, abetted by a private workout with Hart in the face of Rex Harrison's withering, foulmouthed contempt. Hart saved more than Andrews's career; he forced Lerner to do numerous rewrites and recapitulated the lesson of his first hit, "Once in a Lifetime," by removing a pointlessly spectacular sequence while underscoring romance and cutting twenty minutes.

Hart alone prevented the early close of "Camelot," a disaster that was limping badly, with "as many as two or three hundred walkouts in the course of a single performance." Illness had sidelined him before opening night, which Lerner insisted on directing, causing a permanent rent in his association with Frederick Loewe. Hart, recovered from his sickbed, realized that they had one chance. "The Ed Sullivan Show" was preparing a tribute to Lerner and Loewe, including excerpts from "Camelot." He rigorously rehearsed the cast for a week in preparation, and cut the running time of the production so that the horde of ticket buyers stimulated by Sullivan would see a far more trimly structured show than the critics had seen. It was a gallant display of editorial ruthlessness, and it confirmed his touch as a theatrical fix-it man who did not give up. Three months after Sullivan's March broadcast, Kaufman died, at the age of seventy-one. On December 20th, Hart followed, dead of a third heart attack, at fifty-seven. Their work, Bach notes, is "honored by every television situation comedy that derives from it." But a 1983 revival of "You Can't Take It with You," which Jason Robards and Colleen Dewhurst successfully played with familial warmth, rather than firecracker jokiness, suggested a worthier legacy. Perhaps the best way to honor Hart on his centenary, a few years down the road, is to remount "Lady in the Dark," with its superb score, magical dream sequences, and an approach to analysis so quaint it seems eerily beyond time. Indeed, the best of Moss Hart may be so old it's new. ♦

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BOOKS

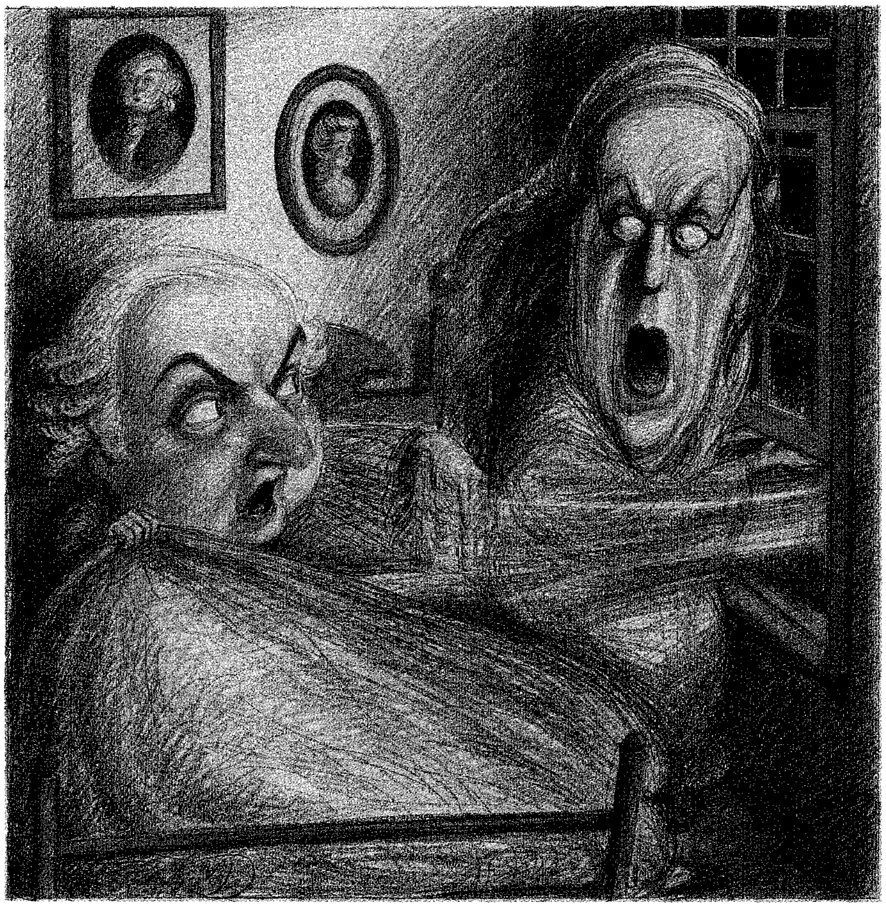
THE AMERICAN CICERO

David McCullough takes on the second President.

BY SIMON SCHAMA

Put John Adams in bed with Benjamin Franklin, and what do you get? Not a quiet night, anyway. Obliged to share not just the same room but the same coverlet in a tavern in New Brunswick, New Jersey, en route to see Admiral Lord Howe in September of 1776, the odd couple argued fiercely over what really mattered: whether the window should be open or shut. Adams, who saw nature through a Calvinist glass, darkly, wanted it closed, for fear of catching cold. Franklin, for whom Nature was the mildest Dame, insisted on its being open, so that the healthy zephyrs could ventilate the lungs. This he argued at such length as they lay together that it became Adams's lullaby: "I was so much amused that I soon fell asleep."

For much of his life, John Adams worried about getting the last word. He knew that his notoriously low boiling point, the weight of his erudition, and his constitutional inability to suffer fools gladly were no more likely to recommend him to the hagiographers of his generation than they had to the electors of 1800. "Mausoleums, statues, monuments will never be erected to me," he predicted gloomily, in 1819. But, notwithstanding his surface lack of appeal—no epic feats on the battlefield, no hidden sexual history, no consummating martyrdom—Adams has had as much memorialization as he could possibly have desired, from editors and biographers: an apt epitaph for the most voracious reader of all American Presidents. Ever since his grandson Charles Francis Adams got to work on his papers, it has been clear that no other statesman, not even Jefferson, left behind such a trove of documents in which the personal was linked with the political, public life with private. All his biographers have pounced on the astonishing diary, which begins with an earthquake in November, 1755, that rattles his father's house in Braintree for four minutes (so he says) and continues through the seismic tremors and convulsions of British America and on to its collapse and rebirth as a new nation. Perhaps the most underrated masterpiece of American literature, what might be called "The Education of John Adams" reveals the diarist to be a creature of passions as well as of principles.



Adams had a propensity for argument, with both friends and foes.

VICTOR JUHASZ

Two modern biographies, both remarkable in their ways, have made the most of Adams's thorny path to posterity: Page Smith's two-volume epic, published in the nineteen-sixties, and John Ferling's less heroic but also movingly written account, of 1992. David McCullough, in attempting to add something to the literary laurels already heaped on Adams's tomb, has his work cut out. What he has accomplished, in "John Adams" (Simon & Schuster; $35), is a typically absorbing and readable narrative, in which, however, the chewy difficulty of Adams's thought has been rendered smooth in the blender of McCullough's literary elegance. The result, if not quite Adams Lite, is a book that makes the old Tartar more uxorious, more commendably civic, more disinterested, and more appealingly approachable than he really was—that rounds the edges of the Adams flint.

Take the issue of Adams's ego. McCullough mostly accepts at face value Adams's repeated protestations that he detested the fakery of political life. It's certainly true that no one had a sharper ear for humbug. Snorting at a colonial governor's promise that "the fair Prospect of the security of your country [was now] being settled upon the most sure and lasting foundation," Adams nailed the hapless blowhard for double tautology ("the security, being secured upon secure foundations"), a classic instance of words being used "mearly for sound." And, after independence, railing at the noisy merchandising of reputation that had already become a depressing feature of American politics, he wrote to his friend James Warren:

> The longer I live and the more I see of public men, the more I wish to be a private one. Modesty is a virtue that can never thrive in public. . . . A man must be his own trumpeter—he must write or dictate paragraphs of praise in the newspapers . . . must hire artists in his turn to set about works to spread his name, make the mob stare and gape, and perpetuate his fame.

But Adams was conspicuously guilty of the vice of vanity he attributed to everyone else in public life. He sat for his portrait at least thirty times and was never satisfied with the result. As he grew older, and fretted about the unruliness of the common people, he let himself fall for pomp. Despite his early belligerence toward haughty Britain, he lobbied hard to become the first American Ambassador to St. James's and was rewarded with not only the job but a tour of Buckingham Palace, where he cooed helplessly over the fine taste of George III. Had Adams had his way with ceremonial titles, the President of the United States would now be addressed as "Your Benign Highness."

When Adams is in sociable dialogue with a partner—his equally passionate, articulate, but long-suffering wife, Abigail; his overtutored son, John Quincy; his daughter Nabby; and, especially, his friend and enemy Thomas Jefferson—McCullough is an acute eavesdropper on the conversation. But the Adams who wore his colossal learning heavily—who was the real education President, believing in the interdependence of liberty and literacy—appears somewhat grudgingly, as though the author (or his publisher) feared that a seminar on the English liberal-republican tradition might be too indigestible a dish for the common reader. The books that formed Adams as a politician—Cicero and Thucydides, Locke's "Two Treatises on Government," John Milton's "Areopagitica"—are dutifully itemized, as if McCullough were cruising the stacks admiring the gold-stamped morocco, rather than diving deep into their content for clues to Adams's convictions.

Adams's career as a champion of independence and a vehement critic of British imperial government began early. From the start, he took his New England Puritan inheritance seriously. It kicked him out of bed each morning, itching to be up and doing. It drove his relentless exercises in critical self-inspection. It armed him against the shock of finding, along his circuit ride, little country towns with "at least a dozen taverns" where, as he wrote in his diary, "diseases, vicious habits, bastards and legislators are frequently begotten." But Puritanism for the young John Adams also meant the imperishable inheritance of the English revolutions of the seventeenth century. Resistance to despotism, and the sanctity of the individual, he thought, began with the Reformation. When, in 1765, an obtuse British government attempted to finance the costs of defending the colonies by a stamp tax, imposed on legal documents and journals (thus offending Adams in both his professional and his intellectual worlds), he identified with the tax resisters against the Stuarts. In 1764-65, articles on the illegality of taxes raised without consent began to appear in the Boston *Gazette*, under the name Humphrey Ploughjogger. "Let it be known," Adams wrote in his "Dissertation on the Canon and the Feudal Law," which, as McCullough says, was a good deal more inflammatory than the musty title implied, "that British liberties are not the grants of princes."

Even when, amid a storm of riots and the summoning of an intercolonial congress of delegates, the British repealed the tax, Adams knew that something fundamental had changed. "Britain and America are staring at each other," he wrote in 1766. "And they will probably stare more and more for some time." Nor did he then become apolitical, though he was undoubtedly busy, building his law practice. For law, in the charged atmosphere of Boston in the late seventeen-sixties and seventies, with redcoats patrolling the streets and customs men boarding vessels in the bay, was inescapably involved in issues of resistance and authority. Every morning in 1768, he and Abigail, to their intense annoyance, were woken by the sounds of fife and drum, the soldiers making a great show in Brattle Square, in front of their house. The oppressive sense of bullying did not prevent Adams from defending British soldiers accused of firing into a crowd that was harassing them, in what became known as the Boston Massacre of 1770. Yet for Adams, his head full of Blackstone, it was the majesty of the law that he was acknowledging as sovereign, not the majesty of King George. One way or another, he often put himself in the thick of it. While more sober spirits (like Washington) condemned the wanton destruction of property shown by the Tea Party, he was ecstatic, declaring it "the most magnificent Movement of all! There is a Dignity, a Majesty, a Sublimity in this last Effort of the Patriots that I greatly admire."

McCullough rather scampers through this stirring history, perhaps so he can get to the great scenes in Philadelphia in the spring and summer of 1776. And there his narrative does catch fire: the sultry, storm-heavy atmosphere (this book has a lot of weather); Abigail's efforts to cope in embattled Massachusetts; Adams's anxiety about the epidemic of smallpox and the ordeals of inoculation as he led the charge for an unequivocal declaration of independence against the dug-in resistance of John Dickinson, of Philadelphia. Inevitably, McCullough concentrates on the major actors in the drama—Jefferson, Dickinson, and Caesar Rodney, of Delaware, half his face eaten by skin cancer, appearing at the last minute to cast his vote for a declaration. But McCullough is surely right to put the emphasis, during the crucial debates in May and the first week of July, back on Adams. Adams had long reproached himself for timorousness. Now he was resolved to put mettle into America. The war may have been started as a legitimate act of self-defense, he said, but it had become a revolution, an irreversible rupture of the bonds of allegiance. Accordingly, his preamble, on May 15th, to a resolution authorizing Congress to take upon itself the functions of government was shockingly uncompromising, calling for the "exercise of every authority under the said crown to be suppressed." When that preamble was adopted, the Rubicon had been crossed. Adams may not have been the author of the document that certified the birth of a nation, but he was, as McCullough argues, the co-author of the deed.

In his late middle age, John Adams was not at all sure that he wanted to be remembered as a firebrand. With America free of Britain, he felt free to praise his country's balanced division of powers as an essential safeguard of liberty, against both a usurping aristocracy and the fickle multitude. With pinpoint precision, Adams identified the reckless contempt with which the French ignored that lesson, and, instead, established a monolithic sovereign power, as the fountainhead of their disasters. Jefferson's refusal to criticize even the worst excesses of the Terror nauseated him. Not for him witty Jeffersonian talk of periodic bloodshed being the manure of liberty.

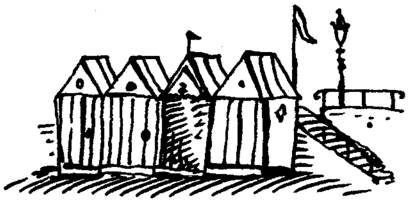
Adams's aversion to revolutionary effusions earned him an unmerited reputation for stick-in-the-mud conservatism, a Federalism that lacked the courage of its own convictions. Though he was indeed a misfit in the brutal hurly-burly of party politics, skeptical of the Jeffersonian agrarian idyll (especially when it was articulated by an owner of ten thousand acres and two hundred slaves), and appalled by Hamilton's military adventurism, he was during his own Presidency faithful to his vision of a truly independent American government.

Less than a year before Adams's death—on the same day as Jefferson, the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence—the sculptor John Browere finally succeeded in making a startling life mask that catches precisely his wish to be remembered as the American Cicero, the orator who made a difference. Browere got the essence of the man: the contempt for ingratiation; the heavy machinery of the intellect pounding away beneath the great cranium; the old mouth struggling for eloquence. David McCullough's portrait may not quite give us the battered titan in all his raw, sulfurous asperity, but his vivid storytelling will surely persuade a generation to look again at this obstinate, brave, and most deeply philosophical of American patriarchs. ◆

BRIEFLY NOTED

A World Made New, *by Mary Ann Glendon (Random House; $25.95).* After the Second World War, the fledgling United Nations called for what would become the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Never before had an international body attempted to comprehensively define such rights, and the drafting committee, which was chaired by Eleanor Roosevelt, struggled over content and language to reflect the diversity of its members' traditions while expressing the commonality of the human race. Mrs. Roosevelt's formidable diplomacy produced agreement, and the document was ratified in 1948. With access to both private and public sources, Glendon, a noted legal scholar, has written a fascinating account of the noble and vexed history of this document, which remains almost as radical now as it was half a century ago.

Frank Lloyd Wright and the Art of Japan, *by Julia Meech (Japan Society/Abrams; $49.50).* Wood-block prints by artists like Hiroshige and Hokusai exerted a palpable influence on Frank Lloyd Wright's design aesthetic, but Wright was able to profit materially from them as well. During his early years as an architect, he supplemented his income by dealing in Japanese art, earning tens of thousands of dollars from sales, often at highly inflated prices, to private collectors, museums, and clients for whom he had built homes. In this meticulously researched, lavishly illustrated account, Wright's mercenary impulse is laid alongside his genuine passion for Japonisme, culminating in a 1919 episode in which, duped by a Tokyo dealer, he wound up selling forged and retouched prints to his best customers. His reputation forever damaged, he responded by ignoring his mounting debts and buying Japanese art only for himself.



A War of Nerves: Soldiers and Psychiatrists in the Twentieth Century, *by Ben Shephard (Harvard; $27.95).* The astonishing number of psychological casualties early in the First World War made the unprecedented mental damage inflicted by modern mechanized warfare clear to all. This history of military psychology—from shell shock to Gulf War Syndrome—describes how treatment has oscillated between sympathetic methods, which risk leaving soldiers too deeply invested in their diagnoses to desire recovery, and tougher approaches, designed to get men fighting again as quickly as possible, which risk further damage. For the military, the spectacle of troops disabled by trauma severely undermined an ethos that relied on an uncomplicated distinction between cowardice and bravery. Psychiatrists, meanwhile, were able to create an entire subdiscipline out of the perception that "war shattered the mind, but in an intellectually absorbing way."

The Tether, *by Carl Phillips (Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $22).* In his earlier votive and erotic poems, Phillips challenged his God with batter-my-heart provocations worthy of John Donne. In this collection, the poet's fifth, the divinity seems finally to have taken him at his word. The cockiness that once permeated the work ("Haven't I hymned your praise enough?" or "*Hard Master* / I called out / *Undo me*") has been subdued to a still, mature reverence. Phillips uses lyric turns to literally turn away, as if the knowledge he's come into were sometimes too much to bear, and a number of these poems conclude with small devastations. Of a hero looking down at his hands after battle in a kind of disbelief, he writes, "Translations are various: *God, / If not for, If only— / Look what I've done.*" There is joy, though, too, and rapture—a notion developed in the extended falconry metaphor that gives the collection its title and its many medieval stags, orchards, kingdoms, and hunts. At the last, Phillips is a classicist and a translator, offering "less the truth, than a way to frame it."

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MUSICAL EVENTS

ALMOST FAMOUS

On the road with the St. Lawrence Quartet.

BY ALEX ROSS

Eleven years ago, the Emerson String Quartet was auditioning younger ensembles for a training program at the Hartt School of Music, in Connecticut. Piles of performance tapes came in, and the Emersons decided to listen to them while driving between destinations on a European tour. One tape, from a young Toronto quartet, juxtaposed the expected Beethoven with a contemporary Canadian work in which the players were required to yell at the top of their lungs. The screaming began just as the Emersons were negotiating a difficult stretch of Alpine road. "We'd heard this perfectly good Beethoven, and we were saying, 'Very nice,' when the screaming started, and we almost lost control of the car," the violinist Philip Setzer recalled. "We could all have died right then and there. Of course, we had to meet the crazy kids who sent in the tape."

A decade later, the members of the St. Lawrence String Quartet—Geoff Nuttall, Barry Shiffman, Lesley Robertson, and Marina Hoover—have a firm foothold in the world of American chamber music. They are the ensemble-in-residence at Stanford University, and they regularly train younger quartets themselves. Yet they have not lost their contrarian streak, and they have a way of catching audiences off guard. There is a restless freedom to their playing, as if the dinner-party conversation of chamber music were about to break down into altercation, demonstration, or confession. "They've got something," David Finckel, the cellist of the Emerson, says. "Performers either have something or they don't, and the St. Lawrence does. I'm not sure what it is. Partly, it's the

The St. Lawrence Quartet's Geoff Nuttall, Barry Shiffman, Marina Hoover, and L

MAGNUM

ability to play the most familiar music as if it were new and unusual. Everything the quartet does becomes contemporary music. Listening, I forget that I do the same thing for a living."

There are at least a hundred full-time professional string quartets in North America, plus an untold number of amateurs. To make a living in this field, you have to be willing to play almost anywhere and at any time. Even a group as famous as the Emerson follows the same exhausting routine: fly into a strange town, rent a car, test out the hall, play the concert, go to the post-concert reception, get a few hours' sleep, return to the airport, and fly to the next date. The St. Lawrence has made successful débuts in London and Amsterdam, and it has also won the acclaim of Canadian fishing villages, Uruguayan mountain towns, and Kansas City public schools. Perhaps its most unusual appearance was in Vietnam, at the Hanoi Opera House, a replica of the Palais Garnier, in Paris. The wealthier patrons were seated in the auditorium, but a crowd of thousands watched a telecast of the concert outside, many of them leaning on their scooters.

ertson: Bringing chamber music to anyone who will listen. Photograph by Gilles Peress.

The one place where the Lawrences have been little seen is New York. One of my earliest assignments as a local critic was to cover their New York début, in 1992; they appeared in the Young Concert Artists series, at the 92nd Street Y, and I was struck by the intelligent passion of their playing. Although they made rapid advances in the business—they signed with Columbia Artists Management, Inc., or CAMI, a powerhouse agency, and got a recording contract with EMI—they never returned in a flashy way. The star system in New York, it turns out, is a finicky one, lavishing immense resources on a tiny élite. Whole weeks of the season are taken up with Yo-Yo Ma projects, Maurizio Pollini perspectives, and James Levine marathons. Every concert becomes an "event," festooned with thematic concepts, panel discussions, booklets, and theatrics. To hear a concert where the event is nothing more than the sheer give-and-take of music-making, you almost have to leave town.

Last month, the St. Lawrence Quartet played two concerts in El Paso, Texas, and one in Joplin, Missouri. There were the usual hassles on the road. A sandstorm delayed the flights out of Dallas-Fort Worth, and when the members of the quartet got to the hotel, at midnight, the reception desk had no record of their reservations. It was one of those sleepy, lost-in-time places—call it the Vista Grande—where guests are a confusing novelty. When I arrived, I was handed a cryptic message that said, "Barry: Call Alex." Still, the vista was grand. You could look out over basketball courts, medical facilities, and pueblo-style suburbs to the brown expanse of the Rio Grande, with Juárez looming on the other side.

The next day, at around noon, the Lawrences gathered in the lobby. If you had been told that they were musicians, but not of the classical kind, you might have guessed that they were a veteran indie-pop band, some well-travelled cousin to Yo La Tengo. Nuttall, the athletic first violinist, found a Y.M.C.A. and had been lifting weights. Shiffman, the second violinist, and Robertson, the violist, had been practicing. Hoover, the cellist, was with her husband, Richard Bernstein, and their seven-month-old baby, Benjamin. Hoover often looks harried: travelling with a baby is hard enough, but a baby and a cello together can spell real trouble. Flight attendants have tried to bar her cello from planes, even though she always buys a seat for it. The attendants apparently have a vision of the instrument flying around the cabin and causing a crash. Hoover is the most organized of the Lawrences—she is the one who knows when the next plane leaves—and she has a way of barrelling past human annoyances as if they simply were not there.

Kwang-Wu Kim, the artistic director of El Paso Pro-Musica, was waiting for the quartet in the lobby. He is, in classical-music parlance, the "presenter." The Lawrences have had all kinds of experiences with presenters: some good, some bad, some indifferent. They have worked with a music-loving radiologist who goes over programming minutiae while on break from the hospital; a philosophy professor who has a seventy-person concert hall in his home; and an eclectic Florida promoter who puts on chamber music one night and Steve Lawrence and Eydie Gorme the next. Presenters who are more accustomed to unruly popular acts are pleased by their demeanor. One impresario found them refreshing after a recent run-in with a

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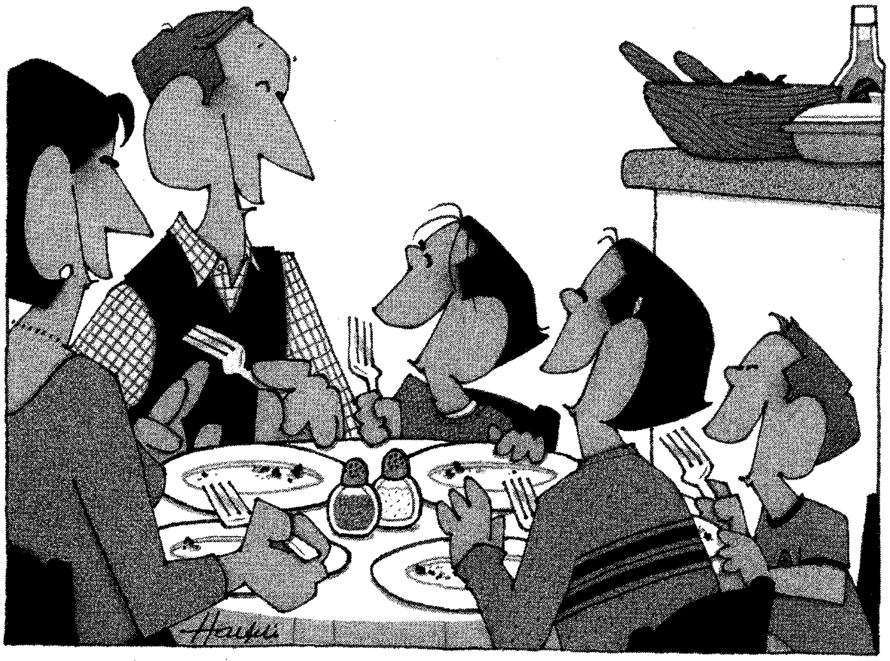

"More aphorisms, please!"

• •

well-known folk-music personality, who had abruptly disappeared from her hotel after noticing that an instance of "improper land management" was visible from her window.

The Lawrences think highly of Kwang-Wu Kim. "He's a genius," they said to me beforehand. A pianist, professor, and all-around explainer, Kim has degrees in philosophy from Yale and in music from Peabody. He has attracted a Who's Who of American chamber players to El Paso during the past eight years. He has also ventured into the El Paso schools, retrieving out-of-tune pianos from janitorial closets and introducing kids to the classics. In July, he will become the president of the Longy School of Music, in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and El Paso was already mourning his departure.

Kim and the Lawrences traded complaints about the unhelpfulness of CAMI. "The people there sent me the wrong programs, and then they told me that they didn't understand the need for sending copies of the program notes in advance," Kim said. The Lawrences collectively rolled their eyes: management's aloofness from their daily lives is a long-running problem. The subject of audience turnout came up. "We're not sure if this is going to be our biggest audience of the year," Kim said. "Somehow, we forgot that this weekend is Passover. Also, Matchbox Twenty is playing tonight at the University of Texas, which means that the students probably won't show up. And we couldn't get an article into the local paper. They told us that they were concerned about already giving too much attention to classical music, which is pretty funny, because they don't pay any attention to classical music at all."

For the two concerts, more than three hundred people appeared, most of them well-to-do and middle-aged. At one point, Kim gave a farewell talk, and the full extent of his genius was revealed. He was a blast of positive energy, flattering the audience with a sense that this series was no less important than the East Coast world from which he came. "I was the laughingstock of the Peabody Conservatory when I announced that I was going to El Paso," he said. "They were horrified. Their basic attitude was 'Another one bites the dust.' Well, we need to stop making value judgments about place. There is absolutely no difference in real musical value between a concert in Carnegie Hall and a concert at the Fox Fine Arts Center in El Paso. Music is a universal act of human conversation, and an identical act of conversation is happening in each place. Haydn didn't write his quartets for New York City, and they are equally at home in El Paso."

In New York, it is considered a bit undignified for performers to address the audience, but the members of the St. Lawrence have found it natural to talk about what they're up to. They have a gift for describing musical abstractions in down-to-earth terms. Nuttall warned the El Paso crowd that a contemporary piece—Jonathan Berger's "Miracles and Mud"—would appear on the first half of the program. "We like to put the modern work second, just before intermission," he said. "That way, you can't come late and miss it, and you can't leave at intermission and skip it." There was knowing laughter from the crowd. He explained the idea behind Berger's work, which has to do with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and played the two recurring folk themes that represent the warring peoples. This demonstration seemed to make Berger's tangy, Bartókian dissonances more palatable. Three-fourths of the quartet is generally enthusiastic about contemporary works; Robertson tends to be initially skeptical. "The viola part is often more interesting in the modern pieces," she told me, "but sometimes I'm happier droning on one note in a Haydn quartet, because I know exactly where that note belongs, logically and emotionally."

Nuttall then talked about Haydn's "Quinten" Quartet, which opened the concert. "I have most of the hard licks," he said. "I'd happily play Haydn all the time, but the others get bored with repeating the same simple figures." He did a run of notes in his sweet-toned, Heifetz-like style. When he plays, he has a habit of kicking one leg back and half getting out of his chair. His hair tends to change length and color; in El Paso, it was cropped short, with blond highlights. "He looks like some dude from the beach," a man at the back of the room whispered. Nuttall's looks are a plus when he is addressing youngsters in educational programs, but the Pro-Musica regulars were a little suspicious. Still, his way of vibrantly zeroing in on details seemed to win them over. "In the final movement," he went on, "Haydn does this thing to the solo line which is actually pretty cool. He puts in this weird fingering so you end up having to slide from one note to another, and suddenly you're playing in Gypsy style—portamento. It's as if Haydn were telling conservatory-trained violinists to forget their training and loosen up."

Nuttall is the St. Lawrence's "secret weapon," as the rest of the group admits. An opera maven and pop-music fan, he plays his solo lines with an airy, vocal freedom, exhibiting a distinct personality that is lacking in many better-known soloists. "He has a way of generating intensity in all of us, with his revved-up excitement at whatever he's playing," Hoover told me. His phrasing often upsets the central pulse of a movement, and the others either follow his lead or scramble to restore rhythmic order. As a result, despite the rigorous discipline of the quartet's rehearsal process, many passages sound riotously improvised. "They play with unselfconscious joy," says the composer Osvaldo Golijov, whose work "The Dreams and Prayers of Isaac the Blind" was performed by the St. Lawrence last week in Santa Fe. "They can excite people who show up at chamber-music concerts by a fluke. I saw this happen with a group of Argentine soccer players."

The St. Lawrence's art of cultured chaos had a bracing effect on Tchaikovsky's Third Quartet, which was the centerpiece of the El Paso concerts. Tchaikovsky and Schumann are two composers whom the Lawrences have investigated thoroughly; they recorded two Schumann quartets two years ago for EMI, and in the fall they will release a disk of Tchaikovsky. Both composers have been accused of writing unidiomatic chamber music, but the Tchaikovsky roared to life on this occasion. In rehearsal, the players concentrated on clarifying its complicated, three-against-two rhythm. In performance, they threw everything back up in the air, flirting with disaster in the opening movement. In the funeral-march Andante, Nuttall's solos sobbed in the middle distance, sounding like 78-r.p.m. records of turn-of-the-century divas; Shiffman's obsessive, one-note patterns gnawed at the fabric of the harmony. The finale played like a scandalous, drunken wake.

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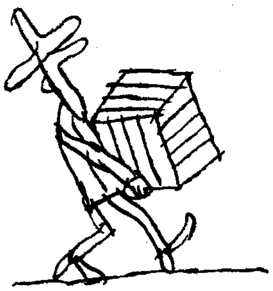
after such a performance, but the post-concert reception is a fact of life on the chamber circuit, and the Lawrences go at it gamely. The El Paso crowd turned out to be more interesting than most. The players were buttonholed in the lobby by the Reverend Paul Green, who congratulated them on raising the cultural temper of the town, and by J. O. Stewart, Jr., who underwrote the concert. Stewart was an impressive man with a hawklike face and a handsome pair of cowboy boots who recently sold his company, El Paso Disposal, for a hundred and forty million dollars. "I worked in the trash business for thirty years," he said, "so I may be a trashy guy, but that was a fine concert, and I liked the new thing, too. Maybe I can get used to that stuff. Like I always say, you can only play with one tennis racquet at a time."

There was a late-night dinner at the home of Charles and Ellen Lacy, in the hills above El Paso. Nuttall, who lived in Texas when he was a child, stayed the longest, drinking wine with a group of reformed good old boys. "I like those guys," he said, as we drove back to the Vista Grande. "They know how to kick back. They're not stuffy, even though they have some weird-ass politics. But I wish there had been a few more young people. Where were the University of Texas students? At Matchbox Twenty, I guess. Kind of kills me that there's ten thousand people seeing them and a hundred people seeing us. I don't see why the difference should be that dramatic. I mean, Rob Thomas is a good singer and all, but we're—we've got the deeper songs."

After the second concert, which took place the following afternoon, the Lawrences left for Joplin. In travel mode, they go their separate ways, not worrying if the others are on schedule. In the vastness of the Dallas-Fort Worth Airport, I noticed that Nuttall had wandered off. "Where's Geoff?" I asked. "We never ask that question," the others replied. It was well after midnight when we reached Joplin. It's a midsize town in the southwestern corner of the state, not far from the country-and-Western playground of Branson. Shiffman caught sight of a poster for Shoji Tabuchi, a Liberace-style fiddler who plays in Branson. The poster read, "Shoji: Need We Say More?" "This is great!" the violinist said, jumping up and down in a fit of ironic excitement. "We should have this kind of marketing. 'The St. Lawrence String Quartet: Need We Say More?' "

Joplin offered a recapitulation of themes already developed in El Paso. This series was also called Pro Musica, and it, too, had a decisive personality at the center. Cynthia Schwab, an exacting Manhattan native, has been working to create a musical oasis in Joplin for twenty years. "The three things in life that mean the most to me are God, hockey, and music," she said. In her garage, a New York Rangers banner hung next to a poster for the Leipzig Chamber Orchestra. Last fall, Schwab approached the St. Lawrence with a surprising proposal: for the twentieth anniversary of her series, she wanted the group to play an all-contemporary program.

The Joplin concert took place in a handsome old church at the center of town. The star attraction was the Third Quartet of R. Murray Schafer, a Canadian composer who writes peculiarly captivating avant-garde pieces. The Schafer quartet has long been one of the St. Lawrence's favorites. It begins with the cellist playing alone, somewhat despondently. One by one, the others enter—from behind the stage and from the back of the hall. War erupts between the violins, with savage accusations traded back and forth. In the second movement, all hell breaks loose: the Lawrences reprise their notorious yelling act, screaming gibberish in tandem with fast-moving dissonant lines. It's a spellbinding spectacle, and it is also a hilarious send-up of the emotional infantilism of the ultramodern repertory. Then, in the final movement, the mood turns solemn, as the quartet plays a prayerful unison melody in ghostly quarter tones. At the end, the music disappears over the horizon of audibility, leaving a mystical silence.



The citizens of Joplin had a mixed reaction to this astonishing piece. A third of them didn't buy it, and they expressed their dismay by leaving at intermission, trudging in stony silence to the church parking lot. There were enthusiastic yelps, however, from a group of younger people in the back rows. They turned out to be music students, some of whom had worked with the St. Lawrence in its quartet-training program at Stanford, and they had driven three hours from Kansas City to see their mentors play. Four of them belonged to a quartet called the Yurodivy, which is Russian for "holy fool." The leader of the Yurodivys was Francisco Herrera, a large fellow in a purple sash. "Did you hear the intonation in the third movement?" he asked. "Incredible. There's no kitsch in their playing. They absolutely believe in what they're doing."

At the inevitable post-concert dinner, Cynthia Schwab made it clear that the Yurodivy crew could not be accommodated. The mood turned glum. Nuttall, in particular, looked crestfallen. He poked at his dessert unenthusiastically. "I'm sorry your young friends weren't able to come," Schwab eventually said, after conversation glided to a halt. "I had to get you over here, and I have responsibilities to my board members." Nuttall shook his head and replied, "You should be bringing more young people like them to your concerts. They are the audience of the future."

It was now close to midnight, and the Lawrences had to catch a 7 A.M. flight the next morning. They piled into their rented Dodge Caravan and drove off. From this tour, each of them had earned, after expenses, a low four-figure sum that wouldn't have covered the hotel bill for Pollini's piano. As I headed to my motel room, I thought of the Yurodivys, driving back to Kansas City in the dark, and of Cynthia Schwab's reception, and of the many ways in which classical music entangles itself in a web of money and status. And I realized that the four musicians of the St. Lawrence are remarkable not simply for the quality of their music-making, exalted as it is, but for the joy they take in the act of connection. ♦

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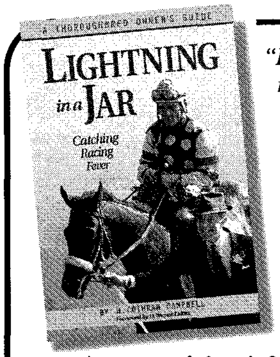

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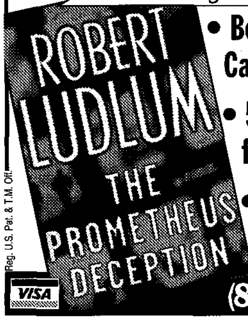

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THE CURRENT CINEMA

FANTASY LAND

A monster in "Shrek," a ghost in "Under the Sand."

BY ANTHONY LANE

The new DreamWorks picture, "Shrek," is a short blast of animated mischief. Springing from a story by William Steig, it tells of Shrek, a bulbous green ogre with ears like trumpets, who lives alone in a swamp and showers in mud. He is charged by a mean little overlord, Farquaad, with the task of rescuing the spunky Princess Fiona from a towering castle, protected by a twenty-four-hour dragon service, and bringing her home to be Farquaad's bride. This is easy meat for Shrek, and a wild ride for his donkey sidekick. Whether it is fun for the rest of us I am not convinced.

The first obstacle, strange to report, is the inordinate level of skill. Merely reading the publicity notes was like going back to school for a physics lesson, with talk of isosurfaces and volumetric rendering. Three billion leaves were grown in a digital greenhouse, we are told, and the donkey fur could be made to "lie flat, overlap, and even swirl," like Sylvester Stallone's chest muscles in his "Rocky" days. Onscreen, the result is at once brilliant and underwhelming; since when was verisimilitude the Holy Grail of animation? Call me an uncritical consumer of capitalist fantasy, but I don't recall firing off indignant letters to Warner Bros. to complain about Wile E. Coyote and his insufficiently detailed snout. Those were cartoons, for heaven's sake; they were *meant* to look silly, or bendy, or pancake-flat. All I ever required of Road Runner was a drastic simplicity, both in his outline (quiff, beak, wheely blur of legs) and in his psychological motivation (food), and I still want the same thing. What I don't want is to gaze at Princess Fiona, at the multifarious play of her near-human features, and wonder if she is supposed to resemble Cameron Diaz.

Digital animation has a brief but peculiar history. After various tryouts, it came into full-length bloom with "Toy Story" and has never really progressed. Of course, there have been technical advances, but the first-time match of form to plot—of pixelation to molded plastic—could hardly be improved upon. It's as if the Lumière brothers had retreated to their garden shed and come out with "Citizen Kane." The one area of uncertainty in "Toy Story" was the non-plastic characters, kids like Andy and Sid, who seemed caught between caricature and realism, and "Shrek" is gripped in the same trap. The whole project feels airless and inbred, and rumor has it that the inbreeding was the offshoot of an in-joke; for Shrek versus Farquaad, we can apparently read Jeffrey Katzenberg versus his former boss Michael Eisner. There are lots of anti-Disney jokes here, from the punishment meted out to Pinocchio at the start to the tacky, ominous courtyard of the villain's palace, which could in a certain light be viewed as a ripoff of Disneyland.

It doesn't take much to see that the problems of two little companies *do* amount to a hill of beans in this crazy world; on the other hand, the hill isn't half as tall as the companies would like to think, and I am suspicious of movies that pride themselves on nudging the funny bone of industry wonks. "Shrek" is fast, clever, and self-reflexive enough to melt the heart of a post-structuralist; even the donkey is a smart-ass. The voice work is zippy, too, with contributions from Diaz, John Lithgow, Eddie Murphy, and, in the title role, Mike Myers, who, for reasons best known to himself, employs a pseudo-Scottish accent throughout. (If that was the deal, why not rent a real

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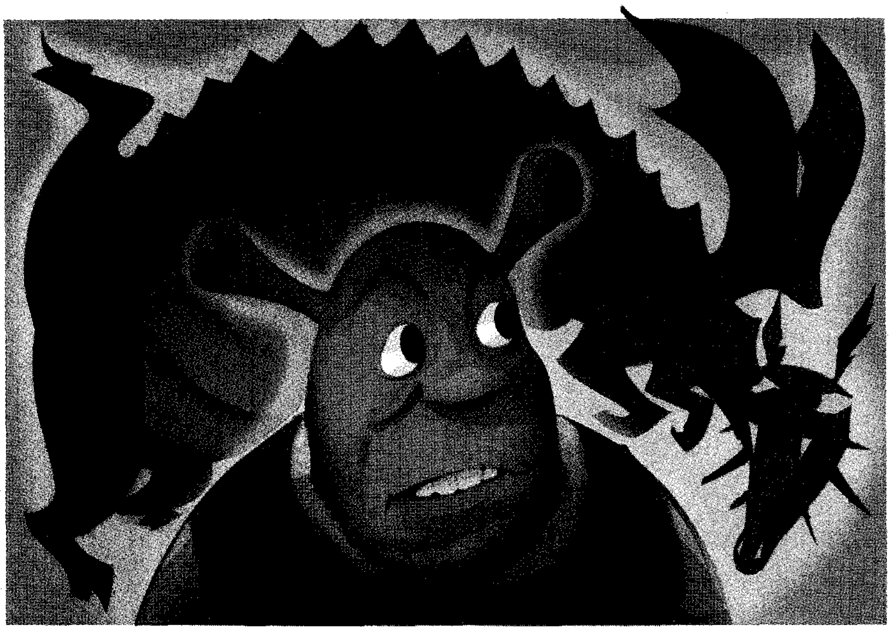
McCoy?) What the film lacks is the faintest glimmer of charm; the need for fairy tales may be childish, but that is why it is both primitive and permanent, and, however much we rail at Disney for taking our offspring hostage and milking their emotions dry, there is something cynical, perhaps saddening, in DreamWorks' insistence that children are now too hip to fall for that old game. If the team behind "Shrek" moves on to a film that questions the existence of Santa Claus, I may sue.



"Shrek" is brilliant, but since when was verisimilitude the Holy Grail of animation?

Charlotte Rampling addicts are a tenacious bunch, whose devotion to the cause is tested by the relatively small doses of her that they manage to obtain. In this country, at least, the supply is tightly rationed, although Her Serene Scariness tends to compensate by appearing in situations that are hard to forget. Just when you had spent a dozen years detoxing from the sight of Rampling in Nazi gear in "The Night Porter," along came "Max Mon Amour," in which, after careful consideration, she chose to make out with a chimp. Now we have "Under the Sand," which overcomes its lack of Fascists and primates by the unorthodox, if simple, tactic of being a very good film.

Rampling, appearing in pretty much every scene, plays Marie, who lectures in English at a college in Paris. She is, like Rampling herself, an Englishwoman who has all but shed the skin of her native land. Marie has been married to Jean (Bruno Cremer)—the ursine type, fond and slow—for more than twenty-five years. When we first see them, they are driving to their place in the country for a summer break. Anyone who is currently staggering through one of those moviemaking courses, in New York or wherever, should skip next week's class on How to Edit and watch the opening ten minutes of this movie instead. Note the way in which every detail, like the boiling of spaghetti or a hand brushing the bark of a tree, is allowed to register its quiet oddity but forbidden to outstay its welcome. Consider the dapper scissoring of one scene into the next and ask yourself about the rhythm of this couple's life. Is the fact that they barely speak an index of how instinctively they know and love one another, or is there a tiny bug of boredom scurrying around in the cracks?

On a fine day at the beach, Jean oils Marie's back and heads into the ocean for a swim. She never sees him again—not in the flesh, anyway, although much later on she stands over a slab of flesh that may or may not be Jean. ("We can't really call it a body at this point," the pathologist says.) The putrefaction, which we do not witness, means that Marie must strap a mask over her nose and mouth, and Rampling is forced to pack all her horror, the panic of disbelief, into her widening eyes. Throughout the film, she not only refuses to believe in her husband's death but continues, in the company of friends, to refer to him in the present tense. "Was this your husband's office?" asks a friend called Vincent (Jacques Nolot). "It is my husband's office," she says—not even stressing the "is," just correcting an error. Rampling makes you understand what it is to be beside yourself with grief; she is certainly not *inside* herself, and you feel that her soul has been shunted away to let her body go through the motions—the traditional French variety, such as shopping for ties and making love instead of lunch. The writer and director, François Ozon, is interested not so much in the trademark languor of the Rampling persona, the hawkeyed chill with which she surveys her territory, as in what kind of woman would feel the need for such intense control in the first place.

The result of this inquiry—it amounts practically to an interrogation—is that "Under the Sand" may come to stand as Rampling's best work; the possibility that it may also be the sexiest, given that she is now fifty-six, strikes me as cause for intercontinental celebration. It should provoke a tremor of envious unease in Hollywood, which, more than ever, seems rattled by the erotic requirements of anyone older than Kate Hudson. As Marie straddled a bemused Vincent and told him to stroke first her hips and then her breasts, I was almost too busy savoring the pathos of her instructions—the same ones, presumably, that Jean used to obey without even being asked—to fulfill my duty as a celebrity voyeur. At one point, the ghost of her husband, a hulking cuckold from beyond the grave, watches over her in bed with Vincent; she smiles at Jean as she comes. This is more tender than creepy, and, for all the formality of Ozon's approach, the film is wonderfully liquid; we see Marie dining behind an aquarium or standing before the iron-gray Atlantic, like a figure out of Caspar David Friedrich, and she herself flows back and forth between youthfulness and the riptide of age, between what she dreams of and what she knows to be true. In the final shot, she runs hopefully toward a distant man on a beach. Some hope. Ozon, ruthless to the last, waits until she is almost there, then cuts her off. ♦

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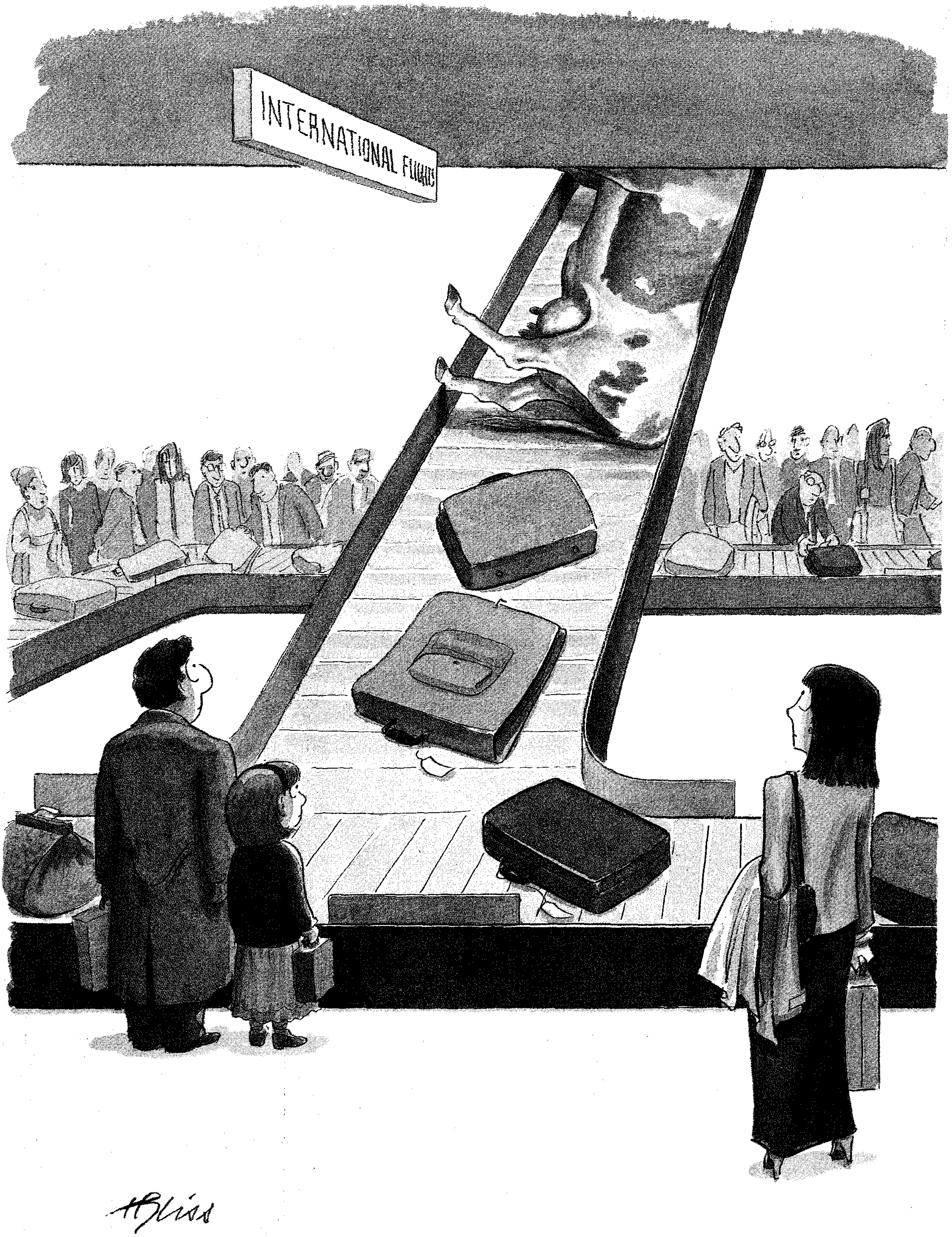
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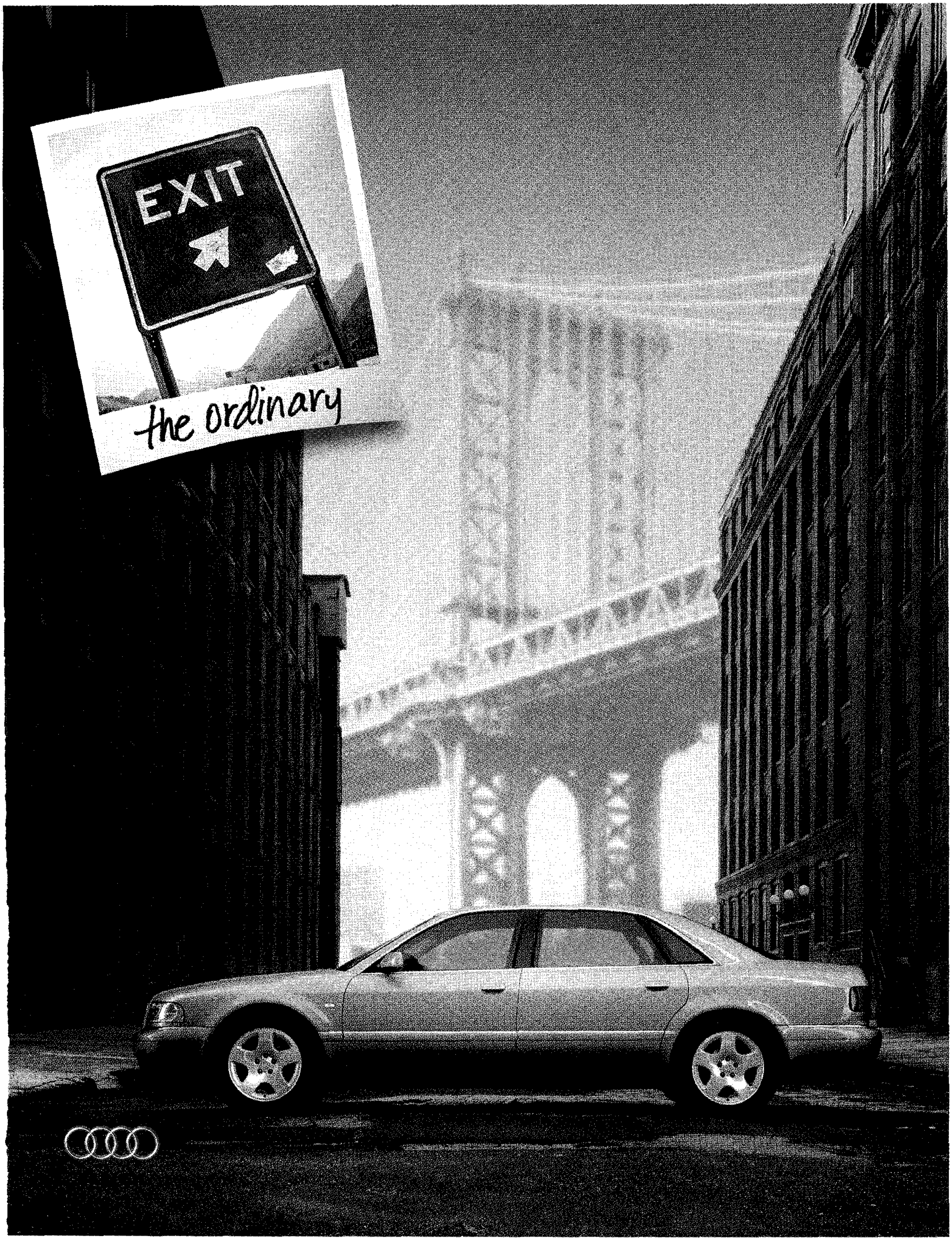

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